CELESTIAL JOYS OF SIMRAN

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮਹਿਮਾ)

80th Parkash Divas
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Books authored

by

Bhai Sahib Bhai Raghbir Singh Ji Bir

have enlightened

&

uplifted

many souls.

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80th
Parkash Diwas
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CELESTIAL JOYS OF SIMRAN

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮਹਿਮਾ)

RAGHBIR SINGH BIR

An English rendering of Simran Mehma
(by Prof. Kulwant Singh P.E.S. (1) (Retd.)
M.A., M.Phil. (English)

The Atam Science Trust
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Foreword

ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ॥ (ਜਪੁਜੀ, ਸਲੋਕ)

Those who have meditated on the Divine Name
Have earned merit through hard endeavour,
O Nanak, their faces shine with Divine Light:
Many shall find release through them.
(Epilogue to Japji)

Late Sardar Raghbir Singh Bir, author of this book ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮਹਿਮਾ or Celestial Joys of Simran, practically lived this dictum and made it a mission of his life to share his experience of the miraculous proficiency of *Naam Simran* with Punjabi speaking people. He had an unflinching faith in the omnipotence and omniscience of the Divine and His embodiment, the *Guru*. With firm determination, he undertook a spiritual voyage through the method of *Naam-Japu-Simran* and experienced extraordinary equanimity, peace and

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tranquility.

He learned from his experience that one arrives at a state of spiritual enlightenment after hard and arduous moral and spiritual discipline and rigorous practice of *Naam Simran,* together with prayerful humility. Alienated from one's mind, intelligence and one's ego, a truth seeker's self feels totally liberated, redeemed and united with the Divine. He or she becomes completely integrated with and inseparable from his real source, the Divine and basks in the glory of his permanent and eternal union with his real Self, the Divine.

In the concluding chapter, 'Journey to the Eternal', he unfolds the secret of this transcendental, spiritual union. During this state of communion with the Divine, all kinds of illusions are wiped out and one is divested of ego or 'I-ness' and existence of body consciousness. In his own words; "As I kept on practising *Naam Simran* with my consciousness without its occupation by mind and its mental constructs, the outside world kept on disappearing from my consciousness. The moment mind and ego are

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eliminated or cleansed out of consciousness, their mental constructs of space, time, cause and the material world would also disappear from consciousness. I acquired this stage of *Naam Simran* with the grace of God and I became one with my real Self.

The whole treatise is highly inspiring and inculcates in the reader's keen desire to delve deep into the recesses of his consciousness and realize his real-self. The methodology recommended is simple but amply rewarding. *Naam-Japu-Simran,* with discipline of the body and mind, has been declared as the true verginal religion of humanity. The fifth Guru, in his masterpiece *"Sukhmani"*, expounds the nobility of *Naam-Simran* and declares it as the noblest religion of the world :

Of all religions the most exalted,
And of all ritual actions the purest,
Is contemplation of the Name Divine.
Of all endeavours the noblest is
Ever the Name Divine to contemplate.
Of all spots the holiest is, saith Nanak,
The heart wherein is lodged the Divine Name.

(Sukhmani Sahib)

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ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ॥
ਸਗਲ ਕ੍ਰਿਆ ਮਹਿ ਊਤਮ ਕਿਰਿਆ॥
ਸਾਧ ਸੰਗਿ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਲੁ ਹਿਰਿਆ॥
ਸਗਲ ਉਦਮ ਮਹ ਉਦਮੁ ਭਲਾ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਜੀਅ ਸਦਾ॥
ਸਗਲ ਬਾਨੀ ਮਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬਾਨੀ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਜਸੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਰਸਨ ਬਖਾਨੀ॥
ਸਗਲ ਥਾਨ ਤੇ ਓਹੁ ਊਤਮ ਥਾਨ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਹ ਘਟਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ॥ (8.3.11 ਸੁਖਮਨੀ ਸਾਹਿਬ)

Simran of the Divine Name is extremely efficacious. It blesses the contemplator with bliss, annuls evils and sufferings of the body and the mind; drives off all fears of death and transmigration; even as it removes all impediments. In nutshell, it is a sure panacea for all the ills (ਸਰਬ ਰੋਗ ਕਾ ਅਉਖਦੁ ਨਾਮੁ). If it is so beneficial, as claimed in *Gurbani*, why do people not give top priority to this most blessed activity? A few who are inspired to engage in *Naam Simran* after reading and understanding *Gurbani* may still not know its technique and discipline. Then there are other impediments and misconceptions about *Naam Simran*. All these aspects of *Naam Simran* have been discussed in this volume.

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The popularity of the book is evident from the fact that its ten editions in *Panjabi* have been sold out. Readers are sure to welcome its English translation. The theme of this book is desperately sought in modern age when millions of people find themselves mentally restless and sick due to unprecedented stress and strain, anxiety and worries in their lives.

I deem it a privilege to be associated with Atam Science Trust and The Dagshai Public School, Dagashai, Solan (Himachal Pradesh), both founded by S. Raghbir Singh Bir. I have vetted a few books of Bir Ji in *Panjabi* and have arranged their translation into English, including the books, "Power of Prayer" (ਅਰਦਾਸ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ), "Divine Name - A Panacea For All Ills" (ਸਰਬ ਰੋਗ ਕਾ ਅਉਖਦੁ ਨਾਮੁ) and "The Ascending Spirit" (ਚੜ੍ਹਦੀ ਕਲ੍ਹਾ). The present work "Celestial Joys of Simran" (ਸਿਮਰਨ ਮਹਿਮਾ) was assigned to Prof. Kulwant Singh for an English rendering. He has accomplished this difficult task with commendable patience and insight. Professor Singh retired as Head of the Department of English, from Government College, Chandigarh. He is not only a good scholar of English language but is bestowed with deep knowledge

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of Sikh philosophy and *Gurbani*. Translation of a book dealing with Sikh mysticism, transcendental meditation and spiritual experiences requires not only considerable skill of the diction but also an understanding of the complex subject. Fortunately he is blessed with that kind of literary acumen and spiritual knowledge. He has, in my opinion, succeeded in capturing the essence and finer nuances of the author's spiritual experience in the translated version of this book. The Trust feels grateful to him for accepting and accomplishing this challenging assignment. May all mankind bask in the self-effulgent light of *Naam-Simran*!

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1st July 2006

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A Voyage To The Eternal (1952)

(ਅਨੰਤ ਦੀ ਯਾਤਰਾ)

Although I have taken twenty to twenty five long years to undertake a very long arduous voyage to establish a rapport with my real Maker, the Supreme Divine, who has no visible physical identity; but now I have surpassed all those obstacles which, in the beginning, seemed insurmountable. Now whenever a craving to have a glimpse of my Beloved overtakes me, it takes approximately half an hour only for me to sit in solitude and take a spiritual flight to reach and sit at His lotus feet.

Many people have written travelogues and books about their travels. Some of them have shared their experiences with their fellow travelers after their trips to America and Europe. In the same way, I have also cherished a desire, many a time, to share some of the experiences of

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my life-long spiritual voyage with my friendly spiritual seekers/pilgrims. Although I know that many of my fellow travellers will not trust my account because they themselves have not experienced those spiritual insights, but I would entreat them in all humility that I too may also be granted this privilege to share my experiences about the spiritual world with those who are still uninitiated much like the privilege enjoyed by those travelers, who having been to America and Europe, have shared their experiences with others.

Everyone has neither reached the polar regions both in the North and the South nor is there any likelihood of many people reaching these polar religions. But everyone would be curious to listen to a person who happens to visit these polar regions. By the same analogy, I would like to state before those who have never given any consideration to the spiritual world or God that the spiritual world is far more vast than this material world. It is a country with unlimited dimensions beyond the ambit of any human linguistic expression where a visitor experiences such spells of ecstasy that all ordinary human

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experiences, pleasures and other attractions pale into insignificance.

I would like to state in this article in a very-easy-to-understand language how I have acquired the technique to take a flight to that spiritual world with an effort of half an hour which earlier took me years to reach.

I sit in solitude; close my eyes and verbally call my Beloved with love and reverence. The verbal calls faint within a few minutes and I sit expectant in silence for His appearance. The material world which appeared ordinary in the beginning takes the form of a madding noisy place. Gradually, these madding, noisy sounds start receding and become distant. Just as the cacophony of birds, returning from towns and countryside towards the trees for a night shelter at the time of dusk, gets dimmed and silent with the night fall, in the same way all the worldly noises start receding and ultimately turn into silence.

After this, I start taking a flight to the higher regions. Several images start rising in the mind after the setting of this silence. Images of men

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and matters which occupied the mind during the day get projected once again on the mental screen. A few moments pass in this way.

Thereafter, following the technique laid down by the great Guru Nanak, I try to control my thought process and bring myself to a state of equanimity and my flickering, wavering mind becomes tranquil. As I become one with my consciousness, the vibrations of bliss and grace emanating from the Godhead start overpowering me. Finally, all kinds of worldly noise recedes from my consciousness. My consciousness rises above all kinds of desires, aspirations and their visual mental pictures. Consciousness rises still higher and enters the nucleus of the Supreme source, the Divine.

In this state, I clearly visualize my self or consciousness as well as the central source of this consciousness. Nothing else exists besides my consciousness and the Divine. Rest of the world just disappears. Again employing the meditative technique of *Naam Simran* laid down by Guru Nanak, I flush out all the residual traces of egoism and after eliminating these, merge with

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the Divine. My individual identity disappears and becomes an image of the Divine. Every kind of duality disappears and my consciousness feels itself as an integral part of the eternal Divine.

In this state of bliss, my outlook towards my physical existence begins to change. I start experiencing as if I am only a spiritual identity without any bodily frame. I get charged with an unlimited spiritual energy. My charged and enlightened consciousness, if it so desires, engulfs the whole universe in the sacred company of the eternal Divine and remains conscious of its wide spread sphere of influence. My consciousness experiences the all-pervasive Divine energy operating as much in the movement of the celestial bodies like stars as in my own consciousness.

My ego still travels with me upto this stage. But at this state, my ego, although it has acquired a highly spiritual dimension, appears to be a very painful entity, a cumbersome burden under which my independent consciousness has remained burdened for centuries and would consider itself fortunate to rid itself of this load.

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At this stage, all the celestial bodies, infact the whole universe appear to be the images of a dream. Everything appears to be an extension of one and the same spiritual Divinity. Beyond this stage, it is impossible to describe the next stage in any linguistic terms, call it Indescribable Bliss, Unspeakable Peace, Nameless Ecstasy, or Undefinable Fearlessness or whatever else. The three dimensions of time, space and causation cease to exist. As one comes out of this trance, one feels tumbling down from a great height into a region of desires, worldly noises and mundane affairs of everyday existence once again.

I am now left with only two aspirations. One is to acquire the ability to merge with this ocean of Divinity. The second one is to go on sharing these spiritual insights with the fellow spiritual seekers who, believing in my experiences, may launch further on their spiritual journey as well as with those who may regard my experiences a pack of lies, farce, fraud or hallucinations of an egoistic mind and condemn it as my pretentiousness. I wish to continue with these two occupations without any credit or till the moment of union with the Divine arrives. Dear readers, I

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am neither a saint nor a prophet. Being a creature of sin and desire, I commit the same human mistakes after emerging from a state of spiritual trance. Holding on to Guru Nanak's technique of meditative therapy of *Naam Simran,* I have endeavoured to undertake this spiritual voyage, often covering an inch of spiritual space over a period of months. Travelling from one stage to another, has taken me years of labour. It has been my conviction that great persons like Guru Nanak can never tell lies and accepting their guidance, one can reach one's destination. The success that I have achieved in this spiritual undertaking with the Grace of Guru Nanak, compels me to spread this message of Guru Nanak in the would to the best of my ability, irrespective of the praise or contempt of the people of the world and my own doubtful credentials to undertake such a task.

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The Divine Power

(ਅਕਾਲ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ)

If we observe a game of tennis being played, the tennis ball seems to be flying from one side to the other side. The ball is not shuttling from one side to the other on its own. It is thrown up by the racquets and the racquets are plied by the players' hands. A layman observes only the movement of the tennis ball, racquets and players' arms.

If we ask a scientist if he observes anything else besides the movement of the tennis bal, racquets and arms of players, he would remark that the movement of these three things is a consequence of something else. The phenomenon that produces this movement is called energy. This energy is being channelised by the mind of the players which controls the movement of the

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ball between the two poles in accordance with the rules of the game.

What is this phenomenon called the Mind? Or what is the soul that lies at the bottom of the mind? Science has not been explaining this secret. In fact, the jurisdiction of physical science ends within the territory of the mind. What lies beyond the territory of the mind is the jurisdiction of Metaphysics. The essence of Metaphysics is that what lies beneath and beyond the human mind or human intelligence is soul. All energy and mental power flows from the soul which itself is a conscious/potent energy :

ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਸੁਖਮੁ ਅਗਮੁ ਹੈ ਕਿਤੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 756

The sire Lord is subtle and inaccessible. In what way can one meet Him?

The whole universe is governed by this potent and Conscious Force. All the elements of nature and its various phenomena – the Sun, the Moon, the stars, winds, rain, storms, the visible universe and visible movement are the creation of this Force/Energy and their movements are governed by it.

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A layman's eyes could see nothing beyond the raging war, dead bodies, blood-soaked field of battle when the Sikh warriors, shouting slogans of victory, jumped into the battlefield and confronted the enemy brandishing their swords and shedding their blood during Guru Gobind Singh's times or when Guru Gobind Singh overturned the Muslim general's chess board just by shooting an arrow from a distance of several miles. He could not discern any mysterious or metaphysical reason behind these miraculous deeds of valour. Even the contemporary scientists would have attributed the accomplishment of these chivalrous deeds to the exercise of physical energy alone.

The biggest reason for this flaw in the vision of the scientists is that they do not possess any tools of search into their own self or soul, though they have equipped themselves with the powerful telescopes which can spot out stars and planets situated at millions of miles in the space.

They have neither any gadgets nor any methodologies to explore their own inner selves. The system and the thought process, on which

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science is based, fails to make any headway in the spiritual quest.

This potent and conscious energy which has always been revealing itself in religious and metaphysical matters has been called martyrdom or valour in the religious terminology.

The manifestation of this conscious (Divine) energy in its highest potential has been revealed through the rarest human acts of sitting on a red hot plate' getting boiled in a couldren of boiled water; being bound on a wheel studded with sharp spokes, getting one's body sliced into pieces; being burnt alive in the burning fire and embracing death smilingly and willingly without being frightened and remaining steadfast and mentally detached from the body's mortification. This divine conscious energy forms the basis of a martyr's steadfast resolution. Some of its other miraculous demonstrations defying any rational explanation, include getting one's body sawn from the middle or getting oneself crucified on the stake and yet looking at the executioner without any malice and remaining occupied in the recitation of *Japji Sahib*. A layman's human eyes

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cannot discern the energy operating during the acts of martyrdom or acts of valour during a terrible battle. This does not mean that physical energy stops operating in the human system during rare acts of valour and martyrdom. On the contrary, both the physical and the metaphysical energy keep operating simultaneously. The only difference is that while operation of physical energy is visible to the human eye, the metaphysical energy's operation is invisible. Both kinds of energy originate from one and the same Divine Energy. Both valour and martyrdom are two different manifestations of a Divine Energy.

Guru Gobind Singh worshipped the Divine power as symbolised by the Sword. Guru Arjan, deriving strength from the same Divine Energy, could suffer the mortification of his physical body while sitting on a red-hot plate or being in a couldren of boiling water. As his flesh disintegrated, he smiled and sang in praise of God's Will :

ਤੇਰਾ ਕੀਆ ਮੀਠਾ ਲਾਗੈ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਪਦਾਰਥੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਮਾਂਗੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 394*
Thine doings seem sweet unto me.

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Nanak craves for the wealth of God's Name.

Both these utterances point to the same steadfast faith in God's Will and its worship under all trying circumstances. Whereas a scientist, even when he is equipped with powerful telescopes, cannot discern Divine power, a person, with a meditational technique and intuitive powers, observes this all-pervasive Divine powers.

ਅਦਿਸਟੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ॥

ਅੰਗ - 87

Through the Guru, he beholds with his eyes the Unseen, Unapproachable, Unknowable and Immaculate Lord.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਤ ਅਖੀ ਵੇਖੈ ਘਰੈ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਸਚੁ ਪਾਏ॥

ਅੰਗ - 603

Nanak, when one meets the True Guru then, one sees with one's eyes and finds the True Lord within one's own home.

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਵਰਤਦਾ ਪਿਆਰਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 605

Nanak, the Beloved is unmanifestly pervading everywhere and it is through the Guru that he becomes manifest.

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A *Gurumukh*, once in touch with this Divine Power, finds no duality in various phenomena :

ਤੂ ਦਰੀਆਉ ਦਾਨਾ ਬੀਨਾ ਮੈ ਮਛੁਲੀ ਕੈਸੇ ਅੰਤੁ ਲਹਾ ॥
ਜਹ ਜਹ ਦੇਖਾ ਤਹ ਤਹ ਤੂ ਹੈ ਤੁਝ ਤੇ ਨਿਕਸੀ ਫੂਟਿ ਮਰਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 25

Thou art the River, All-knowing and All-seeing.
How can I, a fish, find Thy limit?
Wherever I look there Thou art. Getting out of Thee I burst and die.

It is the main goal, a priority, the ideal and badge of honour of the community of the *Sikhs* – the *Khalsa* to meditate and do *Naam Simran* and to regard this activity as the best pilgrimage, the best occupation, the greatest bliss, and regard all other worldly pleasures and privileges as trivial as compared to this most noble occupation. If a *Sikh* or the *Khalsa* treads on the path shown by the guru and meditates and worships the Divine and wins His grace and blessings, then such a devout *Sikh* gets completely integrated with the Divine. This integration keeps a *Sikh* in permanent high morale and all his ordeals get resolved. He becomes completely cleansed and purified and becomes a *Khalsa* in the true sense of the word :

ਖਾਲਸਾ ਮੇਰੋ ਰੂਪ ਹੈ ਖਾਸ।

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ਖਾਲਸੇ ਮਹਿ ਹਉ ਕਰੋ ਨਿਵਾਸ।
Khalsa is my manifestation at best,
And Khalsa is my spiritual abode.

A cleansed and purified *Sikh* deserves to be called a *Khalsa* and an integral part of the Divine. When such an integration takes place, then victory and success belong to the *Sikh* on all fronts. Defeat or failure can never cross his path, because *Waheguru* or the Divine is eternally the victor and victory incarnated.

This Divine power is all-pervasive, omnipresent and circulates in each and every cell of our body. It pervades our body, mind, mental thoughts and soul. We can feel the presence of the Divine in us and have a glimpse of it if we can learn to exercise control over mental waves and desires. The best region to discover the Divine is one's own self and one's own soul :

ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਜਾਨਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਮਨ ਮਾਹੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 634
O dear friend, realise it in thy mind.

ਮਨ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਨ ਭਾਲਿ॥ ਅੰਗ - 569
O my mind, within thee is the treasure; search thou not the thing without.

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Naam Simran or meditational therapy with concentration and understanding is the best and most tested technique laid down by our ancient sages, prophets, Gurus and saints to control our desires, to explore our innerselves and to locate the real source of our consciousness. *Naam Simran* stops the flow of all extraneous desires and makes our mind stand still and silent like the placid water after the stoppage of all kinds of thought movement and in this cleansed and crystallized state finds the Divine located in its deepest recesses. Thus, a *Gurmukh* who follows this technique is able to locate the Divine in his consciousness.

ਗੁਰੁ ਪੂਰਾ ਭੇਟਿਓ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ ਮਨਹਿ ਭਇਆ ਪਰਗਾਸਾ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 609

My Perfect Guru, I have met through the greatest good fortune and my mind is illumined.

Therefore, it is mandatory to meditate, to practise *Naam Simran* with faith, devotion and humility to realize the Divine in one's consciousness. All the ten *Sikh Gurus* from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh have laid great stress on *Naam Simran*. The following two lines from *Sukhmani Sahib* are the essence of the

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philosophy of entire *Guru Granth Sahib* :

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 266

Of all the religions, the best religion is to repeat God's Name and to do pious deeds.

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The True Religion

(ਅਸਲ ਧਰਮ)

There are several guidelines and instructions in the text of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* for the spiritual guidance of mankind. These guidelines can be termed as the quintessential message of Guru Nanak to humanity :

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 266*

Of all the religions, the best religion is to repeat God's Name and to do pious deeds.

These two lines sum up the underlying philosophy of *Sikhism* and *Sikh* religion and encapsulate the broad *Sikh* ethos in a nutshell form.

A *Gursikh* should consider himself fortunate and blessed who has imbibed the true import of these words of the *Sikh Gurus*, because these

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words contain the essence of *Gurbani*'s teachings and all the efficacious effects that follow the imbibing of these words. Almost everyone comprehends the effacious benefits of *Naam Simran* mentioned in the second part of this hymn, but a little bit of misconception still persists in the collective psyche of the Sikh community about the true import of the first part of this hymn.

I attribute all the decline and degeneration in *Sikh* religion and *Sikh* society to the lack of understanding about the significance of *Naam Simran*. I hold the *Sikh* scholars and *Sikh* thinkers more responsible for this lapse than the *Sikh* masses, because the former failed in their duty to instil this habit of *Naam Simran* among the *Sikhs*.

The *Singh Sabha Movement* (The Sikh Reformation Movement 1920) had produced many good results. Establishment of Singh Sabhas (Sikh congregations) and Sikh educational institutions in every town and city, inducement of love and liking for *Gurbani Kirtan* – all these are the fine achievements of *Chief Khalsa Diwan*. But despite all these laudable efforts, the real message or the

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essence of *Gurbani* that is *Naam Simran* has not reached the Sikh masses.

The Akali Movement, similarly, has benefited the Sikh Community in many ways. It is due to the glorious saga of great sacrifices of brave Akali warriors that the Sikhs now have an enlightened political organization, a constitutional administrative body for the management of its shrines, an inbuilt spirit of sacrifice and patriotism for their own community and the nation. But even after this glorious tradition, the Sikhs have still not become a perfectly vibrant nation. Its political organization and its clout and finances have definitely increased manifold, but its communal character and leadership, capable of properly guiding and leading the Sikh nation, has still not emerged.

Noble deeds are born out of noble thoughts. Noble thoughts are born in noble minds and hearts. Good conduct leads to noble thoughts which, in turn, emerge out of good society and association with the good and the noble. And the noblest association and the noblest company is that of *Waheguru* who is the source of all virtues

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and divine attributes.

Whosoever acquires the skill of getting attuned with *Waheguru,* the source of all virtues, he starts imbibing the divine attributes in his own consciousness. A consciousness, soaked and suffused in *Naam Simran* and the divine attributes, is the highest state of human consciousness. It is free from any kind of adulteration of human weaknesses. The thoughts emerging from such an enlightened consciousness are cent-percent pure and divine. The deeds born out of such virtuous and noble thoughts are also really noble and virtuous. The easiest and the best technique to acquire the noble thoughts and deeds is to be one with the Infinite.

Naam Simran means to streamline and sychronise one's consciousness with Divine or the Divine will - the real and the centremost source of energy. This system of streamlining and sychronisation is an art and a technique which was invented by the Indian sages. Guru Nanak revived and perfected it further :

ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਪੁਕਾਰਨਿ ਪੋਥੀਆ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਭਿ ਕੂੜ ਗਾਲ੍ਹੀ ਹੋਛੀਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 761*

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The Simirtis, the Vedas, the Puranas and other Religious Books proclaim, that without the Name Divine all other things are false and worthless.

One can get in touch with the Divine and remain in touch with Him as long as One wishes through the practice of the technique of *Naam Simran*. Whatever actions and deeds one accomplishes after the inspiration born out of Simran-oriented synchronization with the Divine are the noblest actions and deeds in the real sense of the term. It is because of this virtuosity and nobility of thought and deeds born out of *Naam Simran* that it has been termed as the noblest activity worth man's cultivation :

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 266*

Of all the religions, the best religion is to repeat God's Name and to do pious deeds.

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Benefits of *Naam Simran*

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦੇ ਲਾਭ)

ਕੋਟਿ ਲਾਖ ਸਰਬ ਕੋ ਰਾਜਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਤੁਮਾਰਾ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 1003

He, within whose mind is Thine Name, O Lord, is the King of all the lacs and millions of men.

Naam Simran provides several material and spiritual benefits. It supports us here in this life as well as beyond :

ਦੋਵੈ ਥਾਵ ਰਖੇ ਗੁਰ ਸੂਰੇ ॥
ਹਲਤ ਪਲਤ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਿ ਸਵਾਰੇ ਕਾਰਜ ਹੋਏ ਸਗਲੇ ਪੂਰੇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 825

In both the places, here and hereafter the chivalrous Guru protects me.
The Exalted Lord has embellished my this world and the next one, and all mine affairs are adjusted.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਕੀ ਐਸੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥

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ਪੁਤ੍ਰ ਕਲਤ੍ਰ ਵਿਚੇ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 661

Such is the glory of the True Guru, that, in the midst of sons and wife, man obtains emancipation.

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨਿ ਕਾਰਜ ਪੂਰੇ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੈ ਸਿਮਰਨਿ ਕਬਹੁ ਨ ਝੂਰੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 263

Through Lord's meditation, the tasks are accomplished.

Through Lord's meditation, the mortal never grieves.

It is a wrong assumption, one contrary to *Gurmat*, that a practitioner of *Naam Simran* can, no doubt, grow and evolve spiritually but it hardly helps in material progress :

ਜਹ ਜਹ ਕਾਜ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਤਹਾ ਤਹਾ ਉਠਿ ਧਾਵੈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 403

Whithersoever the business and affair of His slave is, thither the Lord runs.

ਨਾਨਕ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਭੇਟਿਐ ਪੂਰੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਜੁਗਤਿ ॥
ਹਸੰਦਿਆ ਖੇਲੰਦਿਆ ਪੈਨੰਦਿਆ ਖਾਵੰਦਿਆ ਵਿਚੇ ਹੋਵੈ ਮੁਕਤਿ॥
ਅੰਗ - 522

By meeting the True Guru, man comes to know the perfect way.

While laughing, playing, dressing and eating, he gets emancipated.

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We can classify the benefits of *Naam Simran* in three categories :

(i) Benefits for our day to day life

(ii) Benefits at the social and cultural level

(iii) Benefits of spiritual nature

(I) **Benefits for our day to day life :** Even if we consider the day to day benefits of *Naam Simran,* nothing is more beneficial than *Naam Simran. Naam Simran* enables a person to fulfill his worldly obligations more efficiently. A practitioner of *Naam Simran* can become the best businessman; the best doctor, the best artist, the best soldier. He becomes capable of performing his worldly duties most efficiently. It is because *Naam Simran* teaches him the technique of concentration and focusing of his energy on any problem. Better concentration leads to greater determination which, in turn, leads to greater effort on which the ultimate success depends. So greater the concentration, the greater the determination; the greater the determination, the greater the effort;and the greater the effort, the greater the success. Since both these qualities (concentration and determination) are the secrets

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of both material and spiritual success, so a pactitioner of *Naam Simran* achieves a greater degree of success in whatever task he undertakes to accomplish. It is also worth realising and remembering that accomplishing a task with concentration leads to greater concentration of minds which leads to success in all human activities. In this way, the acquisition of the habit of concentration leads to a great output out of *Naam Simran* creating an all round multiplier effect in achieving perfection.

(II) As good health is essential for achieving success in worldly affairs, a sound mind is also very necessary. As bodily ailment impedes human progress in life, mental weaknesses such as selfishness, greed, anger, envy also create impediments in the way of man's progress. Both good health and a sound mind are, thus, required for worldly success. One should have a physique which is healthy, agile, strong and capable of hardwork as well as a mind full of healthy and constructive thoughts. As physical exercise keeps us fit and healthy, similarly *Naam Simran* keeps our mind and soul healthy and unpolluted.

The western philosophers and thinkers these

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days consider even physical health dependent upon the soundness and purity of human thoughts. Earlier it was considered that a sound mind lives in a sound body. But now it is believed that a sound mind determines a sound body. It is, therefore, necessary that possession of a sound mind is even more necessary than a sound body. It is because the state of our mind affects our body each moment of our life.

A man having a virtuous, cheerful, carefree, fearless and clean hearted and loving mental disposition or temperament would always enjoy good health free from any diseases. A person with a vicious temperament, depression, tension-ridden mind and having a selfish, malicious and greedy nature will always remain disease-ridden and sick.

Thus, for maintaining a good psychic balance, *Naam Simran* proves beneficial for both physical and mental health. A person devoted to *Naam Simran* gets his psychosomatic (body-mind) rhythm synchronized with the rhythm of the Prime Source of Energy – the Divine Will and all the divine attributes start getting embedded into his consciousness according to his capacity of acquisition of these attributes. Such a spiritually

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enlightened consciousness can utilize any amount of these divine attributes and exercise these attributes in his life for his own well-being as well as the well-being of others because his consciousness is as inextricably linked to the eternal omnipotent *Waheguru* as a drop of water is linked to the vast ocean, or an electric fan to the electric current or a tree with deep roots on a river bank to the underground water. As a tree nourishes its branches and leaves by tapping energy from the deep soil, similarly a person steeped in *Naam Simran* keeps on nourishing his body, mind, soul and consciousness, infact his whole being, by drawing upon his Divine Source of eternal energy. As consciousness keeps on getting healthier and cleansed, body also keeps on getting healthier and stronger. Being sound and healthy in body and mind, success and happiness follow in the life of a meditative person given to Naam-Simran. This is the secret of real and permanent success in life.

(III) A seasoned practitioner of *Naam Simran* becomes capable of exercising complete control over his thoughts and desires. He no longer remains a slave of his desires and thoughts but

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gets a complete command over his mental and bodily urges. He does not allow any contaminating immoral desires and thoughts of fear, anxiety and depression take possession of his mind or consciousness. On the contrary, he keeps his mind and body, infact his whole being, completely full of peace and happiness by entertaining all the constructive and morally-uplifting thoughts of peace, patience, contentment, love and fearlessness in his consciousness. Ordinary persons are slaves of natural human desires, and demeaning thoughts. They keep on suffering because of their immoral thoughts and desires feeling happy very rarely because of some odd constructive thought. But a spiritual practitioner of *Naam Simran*, knowing the source of all desires, does not allow immoral and negative thoughts to occupy his mind or consciousness. As a result of his psycho-spiritual orientation, he always lives in high spirits and cheerfulness.

(IV) As we get a discharged battery reactivated and recharged by connecting it to an electric current, a *Naam Simran* practitioner gets himself reenergized and revitalized by connecting

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his consciousness to the Prime Source of energy-*Waheguru*. Thus, he keeps on strengthening his nervous system everyday and making up the daily loss of physical and mental energy through a daily dose of *Naam Simran.*

ਜੀਵਨ ਰੂਪੁ ਸਿਮਰਣੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਤੇਰਾ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਹਿ ਬਸਹਿ ਤਿਸੁ ਨੇਰਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 743*

Life-giving is Thine contemplation, O Lord. He to whom Thou showest mercy; near him abidest Thou.

In this way, *Naam Simran* serves as a potent tonic for human well-being. Its daily intake not only keeps life healthy but strengthens and energises life. Even the life span in years also can be increased as one wills :

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਬੁਢੇ ਕਦੇ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸੁਰਤਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1418

The God-conscious- beings, within whom is the consciousness of Divine knowledge, age not ever.

ਸਦਾ ਰਹੇ ਕੰਚਨ ਸੀ ਕਾਇਆ ਕਾਲ ਨ ਕਬਹੁ ਵਿਆਪੈ॥
(ਗੁਰੂ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਸਿੰਘ)

Human physique (of Gurmukhs), remains as pure as gold forever.
Nor does time ever disintegrate them.

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ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਹੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਿਰੁ ਜੀਵਹੁ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਅਨਦ ਅਨੰਤਾ॥
ਰੰਗ ਤਮਾਸਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਆਸਾ ਕਬਹਿ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ਚਿੰਤਾ॥

ਅੰਗ - 496

Ever quaff the Nectar of God's Name. May thou live long and may the meditation of God afford thee endless delight.

(V) Since the Divine is eternally blissful, ecstatic and fearless, so a devote steeped in *Naam Simran* or meditation, being continuously in tune with the divine also passes through his life in a similar state of bliss, ecstasy and fearlessness. He never loses his mental equilibrium. Even if during the earlier phases of his meditative life his psychic balance gets a little bit destabilized, he restores his nervous equilibrium through his contemplative exercise of *Naam Simran*. A person devoted to *Naam Simran* neither falls into pits of depression during phases of adversity, nor gets inflated with pride or boastful bravado during phases of prosperity. Both of these extreme postures of depression and inflated ego are detrimental to the devotees of *Naam Simran*.

(VI) A practitioner of *Naam Simran* does not ordinarily fall sick. But even if he falls sick sometimes, he gets well soon with the practice of

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Naam Simran and minimum does of medication without any special treatment by doctors. It is because the prime source of life - the Divine is beyond the jurisdiction of disease and other ailments and accidental causes of this illusory material world. The Divine exists in an eternal state of bliss, beauty, health and happiness. And as a practitioner of *Naam Simran* gets in touch with the Divine through meditation, all his bodily ailments disappear instantly. As a base metal gets converted into gold with the mere touch of *Paras* (alchemist's stone), similarly a devotee gets cured, healthy and immune with a contact with the Divine.

ਸਿਮਰਉ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਵਉ ॥
ਕਲਿ ਕਲੇਸ ਤਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਮਿਟਾਵਉ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 262*

Remember, remember God. By remembering Him thou shalt attain peace and efface, from within thy body, strife and anguish.

(VII) A devotee given to *Naam Simran* achieves all those comforts, bliss and happiness through *Naam Simran* for which the people of the world keep on struggling and hankering after. He acquires all those privileges and comforts from within through *Naam Simran*, which the worldly

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emperors strive to achieve with the use of guns, canons and large armed forces.

(VIII) A man steeped in *Naam Simran,* never feels lonely and alienated. Wherever he goes, the Divine is always with him.

ਘਰਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਤੇਰਾ ਭਰਵਾਸਾ ਤੂ ਜਨ ਕੈ ਹੈ ਸੰਗਿ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 677

Within home and without, I have Thine support, O Lord. Thou art ever with Thy slave.

If enemies surround him, he confronts them with the recitation of the following hymn :

ਜਿਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਕੋਟ ਕਟੀ ਸੈਨਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1155*

He in whose mind the Lord's Name bides; he owns many millions of armies.

When he is attacked by the enemies from all sides, he proudly believes in the truth of the hymn :

ਸਤਰੁ ਅਨੇਕ ਚਲਾਵਤ ਘਾਵ,
ਤਉ ਤਨ ਏਕ ਨ ਲਾਗਨ ਪਾਵੈ॥

Let the enemy attempt to injure me, with innumerable weapons.
My body will remain unscathed
From the fury of their assault.

He does not feel insecure or frustrated when

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his relations desert him in the time of crisis. He finds his best friend and relation – the Divine and His presence with him and ignores the opportunist worldly human relations. He always feels being cuddled and nursed by his real parent – the Divine :

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੋ ਭਗਤਿ ਵਛਲੁ ਬਿਰਦਾਇਓ ॥
ਕਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲ ਬਾਰਿਕ ਕੀ ਨਿਆਈ
ਜਨ ਕਉ ਲਾਡ ਲਡਾਇਓ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 498*

The innate nature of the Lord is to love His devotees. God cherishes His slave and caresses and fondles him as His own child.

(IX) For practitioner of *Naam Simran,* life is no longer a riddle or a mystery. He understands life in its complete reality. Realising the true goal of life, he strives to achieve this goal – the goal of merging or uniting with the Divine. He does not waste his time like some of the people caught in the vicious cycle of doubt and faith. *Gurbani* describes these wavering individuals as the aimless hankering dogs :

ਦੁਆਰਹਿ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਸੁਆਨ ਜਿਉ ਡੋਲਤ ਨਹ ਸੁਧ ਰਾਮ ਭਜਨ ਕੀ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 411

Like a dog, he wanders from door to door and is not conscious of Lord's meditation.

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(X) A meditative soul finds himself in the midst of inexhaustible treasures of the Divine. So he never thinks of amassing wealth through unfair and foul means. He feels why should he indulge in fraud and acts of swindling, when the Divine is already endowing him with all the blessings :

ਵਲਵੰਚ ਕਰਿ ਉਦਰੁ ਭਰਹਿ ਮੂਰਖ ਗਾਵਾਰਾ ॥
ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਦੇ ਰਹਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਦੇਵਣਹਾਰਾ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 461***

By practising deceit, thou fillest thy belly, O ignorant fool.
God, the Giver, continuously gives thee everything.

As there is an inexhaustible amount of air in the atmosphere, nobody tries to store or hoard air in his possession, similarly a devotee given to *Naam Simran* finds himself in the midst of endless treasure of prosperity and affluence. So he never tries to possess things forcibly or envies anybody else's fortune.

(XI) *Naam Simran* equips a person with a such a technique that he adopts to solve all his problems and tribulations fearlessly and overcome all of these. He keeps on marching ahead in his life without any fear. He has acquired this technique through the practice of *Naam Simran*. It

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is a direct result of *Naam Simran*. He develops such firm faith in mainstay in God during the moments of crisis in his life, leaving aside all other human and material efforts. He thinks of no other support during the time of adversity :

ਮਤਾ ਮਸੂਰਤਿ ਅਵਰ ਸਿਆਨਪ ਜਨ ਕਉ ਕਛੂ ਨ ਆਇਓ ॥ ਜਹ ਜਹ ਅਉਸਰੁ ਆਇ ਬਨਿਓ ਹੈ ਤਹਾ ਤਹਾ ਹਰਿ ਧਿਆਇਓ॥

ਅੰਗ - 498

The Lord's attendant knows no design, politics and cleverness.
Wheresoever an occasion arises, there he meditates on God.

ਅਉਖਧ ਕੋਟਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ॥
ਤੰਤੁ ਮੰਤੁ ਭਜੀਐ ਭਗਵੰਤ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 866*

Meditation of the Lord is the cure-all of the myriads of maladies.
My charm and spell is the remembrance of the Illustrious Lord.

ਰੋਗ ਸੋਗ ਮਿਟੇ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਧਿਆਏ ॥
ਮਨ ਬਾਂਛਤ ਪੂਰਨ ਫਲ ਪਾਏ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 866*

Dwelling on the Lord, ills and woes are annulled;
And the man is blessed with all his heart-desired boons.

ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਜਾਇ ਬਲਾਇ ॥

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ਸਰਬ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 193*

By remembering God, thy calamity shall be averted and all the joys shall come and abide within thy mine.

(XII) *Naam Simran* also arms him with a keen sense of discrimination of sifting truth from falsehood. He develops a faculty to see through the motives of others and never gets cheated either in worldly matters or in matters of social welfare.

ਨਾ ਓਹਿ ਮਰਹਿ ਨ ਠਾਗੇ ਜਾਹਿ ॥
ਜਿਨ ਕੈ ਰਾਮੁ ਵਸੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 8*

They, in whose hearts God abides die not and nor are they hoodwinked.

A fraudulent person has a trace of fraud in his genes, otherwise how can he commit a fraud with others. *Naam Simran* removes all traces of fraud and duplicity from a devotee's system. No one can dare to commit a fraud on him. All kinds of intrigues such as fraud, deception, mistaken identity which may deceive ordinary persons, fail to hoodwink a spiritual devotee steeped in *Naam Simran*. He acquires an immunity against all kinds of these unbecoming acts. Material temptations ensnare ordinary human beings only to

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disappoint them and knock them down, so that they may come out of their ignorance and wake up into spiritual rejuvenation. Those who are already spiritually enlightened do not get ensnared into meshes of material temptations. Their need for material possessions ends. Being detached from the material temptations, they treat material comforts as the means or the servants for carrying on their orders and run several errands :

ਮਾਇਆ ਹੋਈ ਨਾਗਨੀ ਜਗਤਿ ਰਹੀ ਲਪਟਾਇ ॥
ਇਸ ਕੀ ਸੇਵਾ ਜੋ ਕਰੇ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਕਉ ਫਿਰਿ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਕੋਈ ਗਾਰੜੂ ਤਿਨਿ ਮਲਿ ਦਲਿ ਲਾਈ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇਈ ਉਬਰੇ ਜਿ ਸਚਿ ਰਹੇ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 510

Mammon is a she-serpent, which is clinging to the world.
He, who performs her service, him she ultimately devours.
Some rare Guru-ward is a snake-charmer and he has trampled and crushed her and thrown her under his feet.
Nanak, they alone are saved, who remain absorbed in the True Lord's love.

ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾਸੀ ਭਗਤਾ ਕੀ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥
ਚਰਣੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਤਾ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 231

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Mammon is the hand-maid of God's devotees, and performs their service.
If man falls at their feet, then, does he attain to Master's Mansion.

(XIII) A practitioner of *Naam Simran* after uniting with the Supreme Source of happiness - the Divine, regards sensual pleasures as base and inferior. By overpowering these immoral vices and sins of the sensual pulls and urges through *Naam Simran,* he attains a state of spiritual stability. He now regards the sensual pleasures as life-long ensnarements and traps. Regarding these animal and sensual pulls and pressures of the flesh as sensual cobwebs, he endeavours to get out of these stifling temptations through the continuous practice of meditation or *Naam Simran.* He finds an ultimate release from these snares.

(XIV) Such spiritually enlighted person, after being integrated with the Divine and becoming the closest confidant of the Divine, considers the whole universe as his own territory. He, now, has neither undue craze for material objects nor any undue craving for their possession. He attains a sense of contentment in the real sense of the term, and becomes as independent and self-reliant as

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God Himself :

ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਸੇ ਬੇਮੁਹਤਾਜੇ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਹਿ ਸੇ ਸਰਬ ਕੇ ਰਾਜੇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 263*

They, who meditate on the Lord, are without want?
They, who meditate on the Lord, are the monarchs of all.

Naam Simran provides him with such a perfect sovereignty and self-reliance that he considers all those who possess material assets as paupers and beggars. He considers all material possessions and objects as temporary, perishable frivolous toys. These material objects are extremely temporary, fleeting and momentary attractions not worth man's cultivation and possession :

ਕਿਆ ਮਾਗਉ ਕਿਛੁ ਥਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹਾਈ ॥
ਦੇਖਤ ਨੈਨ ਚਲਿਓ ਜਗੁ ਜਾਈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 481*

What shall I ask for? Nothing remains stable. I see with my eyes that the world is passing away.

Being detached and indifferent towards material things, there is a surfeit of these objects all around him. It is a law of nature that the more one craves for material possessions, the more these objects become illusive, but the more one

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detaches oneself from these things, the more these become available in abundance :

ਗਹੁ ਕਰਿ ਪਕਰੀ ਨ ਆਈ ਹਾਥਿ ॥
ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਕਰੀ ਚਾਲੀ ਨਹੀ ਸਾਥਿ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਉ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਦਈ ॥
ਤਬ ਓਹ ਚਰਣੀ ਆਇ ਪਈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 891*

Even by grasping with care, mammon remains not in the mortal's grip.
Howsoever man may love it, it goes not with him.
Says Nanak, when man abandons, then it comes and falls at his feet.

ਬਿਨ ਮਾਂਗੇ ਮੋਤੀ ਮਿਲੇ, ਮਾਂਗੇ ਮਿਲੈ ਨਾ ਭੀਖ॥
Pearls one may get even without asking
Yet may not get alms even upon begging.

Thus, by adopting a posture of indifference and detachment, a meditative devotee given to *Naam Simran* gets liberated from worldly desires and cravings. Indifference in this context neither means neglect nor carelessness about material needs, but a sort of divine detachment while remaining very much in the midst of material world. This lends him a unique sense of sovereignity and self-reliance :

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ਤਾ ਕਉ ਕਹਹੁ ਪਰਵਾਹ ਕਾਹੂ ਕੀ ਜਿਹ ਗੋਪਾਲ ਸਹਾਏ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1266

He, whose succourer is the World-Sustainer; say, under whose subservience can he be?

(XV) *Naam Simran* removes all sense of fear and envy from the devotee's consciousness, because he has permanently integrated himself with the fearless and malice-free Divine *Waheguru* :

ਭੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਕਉ ਦੇਤ ਨਹਿ ਨਹਿ ਭੈ ਮਾਨਤ ਆਨ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1427

Whosoever frightens none nor is afraid of anyone.

He alone feels scared who finds himself alienated from the Omnipotent. Why should one feel scared when one finds none else than the One and only One Omnipotent. The underlying philosophy of enmity is duality. Envy, enmity, rivalry exist in duality. But the moment duality ceases to exist or when one unites permanently with the Divine through *Naam Simran*, all kinds of enmity, rivalry, fear, dependence disappear :

ਜਿਨ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਜੀ
ਤਿਨ ਕਾ ਭਉ ਸਭੁ ਗਵਾਸੀ ॥
ਜਿਨ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਜਿਨ ਸੇਵਿਆ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਜੀ
ਤੇ ਹਰਿ ਹੰਰਿ ਰੂਪਿ ਸਮਾਸੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 11

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They who meditate on the Fearless, the Fearless Lord; their fear is all shaken off.
They who have served, they who have served my Sire God; they are absorbed in the personality of Lord God.

ਭੈ ਮਹਿ ਰਚਿਓ ਸਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਭਉ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਿਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰਾ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 192***
In fear the whole world is engrossed.
He, who has the Divine Name for his support, has no fear.

As human hands never work in opposition to human feet or human eyes never feel jealous of human ears, similarly a person, who has realized the underlying unity behind various objects and phenomena of the world through the practice of *Naam Simran,* never entertains any ill will towards anybody. He finds an underlying unity beneath all kinds of diversity. His soul cries in joy :

ਨਾ ਕੋ ਬੈਰੀ ਨਹੀ ਬਿਗਾਨਾ
ਸਗਲ ਸੰਗਿ ਹਮ ਕਉ ਬਨਿ ਆਈ ॥. ***ਅੰਗ - 1299***
No one now is my enemy, nor is anyone a stranger to me and I am the friend of all.

When human consciousness attains this spiritual status, it gets reflected in the personality of a spiritual devotee. He becomes a cynosure

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and darling of the whole humanity. Foes turn into friends and aliens become one's own allies. Not only human beings, even other species of creatures like birds and animals develop a relationship of love with him. Even dangerous, carnivorous animals do not harm him. Once, a spiritual saint entered a cave for meditation at dusk. It was a den of a lion and lioness couple. When this animal couple returned to the cave at night, they kept on circling around the cave the whole night finding a saint inside their cave immersed in meditation. When the cowherds told the saint in the morning that the cave was a den of lion-lioness couple, the saint remarked that he felt the presence of a few visitors around, but being good hosts, they never disturbed their guest. A Gursikh had narrated this incident to me.

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Naam And Happiness

(ਨਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਸੁਖ)

It is written on almost every page of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* that *Naam Simran* brings about comfort, solace and happiness and lack of *Naam Simran* leads to suffering :

ਮਨ ਰੇ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 67*

O' Man! meditate thou on the Name Divine so that thou may obtain peace.

ਡਿਠਾ ਸਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਨ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 322*

I have seen the whole world, there is no peace without the Lord's Name.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਝੂਠੇ ਸਗਲ ਪਾਸਾਰੇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 694*

Without the Lord's Name, all the ostentations are in vain.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਜਗੁ ਧੰਧਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 358*

Without God's Name, the world is but a turmoil.

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ਅਵਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਿਤੈ ਨ ਕਾਮ ॥
ਮਿਲੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਭਜੁ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 378

Other affairs are of no avail to thee. Joining the society of saints, contemplate over the Name alone.

According to *Guru Granth Sahib's* teachings there is a direct link between *Naam Simran* and happiness and between lack of *Naam Simran* and suffering. In this article, we will try to explain why there is a sure and direct link between *Naam Simran* and happiness. Why there can not be a permanent happiness without *Naam Simran*. What is the scientific and rational explanation for this link between Naam and happiness? Is this a universally acknowledged truth that *Naam Simran* and happiness go together? Will this truth prevail till eternity as it has prevailed since the creation of life on this planet? A practitioner of *Naam Simran* experiences that as his consciousness enters deeper and deeper into *Naam Simran,* he experiences a sense of great bliss and great benediction, but the moment, his consciousness gets carried away by worldly thoughts, he starts feeling either dilution in his sense of bliss or complete loss of it. This experience clearly

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explains that our sense of bliss is lost solely because of our occupation with the worldly thoughts. Otherwise our consciousness, minus the worldly thoughts, is synonymous with bliss. Practice of *Naam Simran* also brings about a realization about another aspect of human consciousness, which is that it identifies itself with any kind of thought that it entertains. As water contained in coloured bottle acquires the colour of the bottle, similarly human consciousness identifies with the kind of thought that it nourishes. It feels elated while entertaining noble thoughts and feels pained and suffocated while nourishing evil thoughts. As water is colourless but appears red or black according to the colour of the bottle that contains it, similarly human consciousness remains intact even while identifying itself temporarily with the thoughts that invade it. As water retains its colourless hue as it is taken out of a coloured bottle, similarly human consciousness regains its permanent identity of poise and bliss, the moment it gets liberated or emptied of worldly thoughts. A practitioner of *Naam Simran* also realizes that the worldly thoughts can never leave a permanent

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stain on human consciousness. Whatever momentary bouts of happiness or pain his consciousness has been experiencing due to the purity and impurity of his thoughts have been completely temporary and inferior experience to the his permanent sense of poise and bliss. All these spiritual insights about the true nature of human consciousness and its permanent sense of bliss come through the continuous practice of *Naam Simran*.

When this practice of *Naam Simran* is carried on for years together, then a devotee starts realising that his consciousness or soul is related to the world only through the channel of human thoughts. But when human consciousness attains a state of complete thoughtlessness, the link between human consciousness and outside world is totally snapped as the application of pressure on the clutch pedal of our automobile delinks the engine from the wheels. A highly enlightened practitioner of *Naam Simran* realizes that his physical body, its biological requirements, pleasures, sorrows, needs, wants, acts of sin and charity, disease, death and objects such as the sun, the moon, the sky and the universe are

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nothing but the projections of his own thoughts.

As water contained in a black coloured bottle is not aware of its own colourlessness but appears to be black because of its container, the black coloured bottle, similarly, our consciousness being covered with the multiple layers of thoughts and desires of so many earlier lives, loses awareness of its own real identity. Identifying itself with thoughts and desires and getting completely overpowered by these, it goes astray. As after taking the water out, the coloured bottle containing water has been turned upside down, similarly *Naam Simran* has to be filled into our consciousness to empty it out of every trace of worldly thoughts and desires. *Naam Simran* projects the image of the Divine *Waheguru* before the practitioner's consciousness. It evokes an image of *Waheguru* and His Divine attributes. The practitioner's soul or consciousness starts getting rid of worldly desires and thoughts and starts leaning towards the thoughts of *Waheguru*. As the intensity of *Naam Simran* increases, human soul or consciousness begins to get fixated or occupied with *Waheguru*, who embodies human consciousness as well. The more the

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consciousness enriches itself with *Naam Simran*, the more it gets closer to its real source the *Waheguru*, and the more it goes on losing sight of worldly images.

Therefore, it is incumbent to alienate human consciousness from its worldly affiliations and integrate it with the prime source *Waheguru* in order to fill it with perfect bliss. This alienation and integration can only be brought through *Naam Simran*. Sensual pleasures provide only temporary and imperfect pleasures, because human senses, which provide these pleasures, themselves are mortal. When the sensory organs themselves are mortal, how can these provide an eternal satisfaction and happiness. That is why human soul passes through several births and deaths but fails to get contented.

Gurbani of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* lays stress on *Naam Simran* because its practice provides happiness and bliss from within rather than from outside world where man has been searching for happiness since ages.

As is the link between lock and key, same is the permanent relationship between *Naam Simran*

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and eternal happiness and bliss. As long as human consciousness is involved in worldly thoughts and desires, it will remain alienated from its Prime Source *Waheguru* and it will continue to remain in need of the necessity of integrating with Him. In other words, as long as this universe remains in existence, the significance and importance of *Naam Simran* will also be felt. Invention of *Naam Simran* surpasses all other inventions because it is the greatest, the most wonderful, the most beneficial and the easiest invention – whereas other inventions have created many complications for mankind. Invention of *Naam Simran* has provided relief to mankind from its various tensions and integrated human consciousness with its prime and innermost source of life, *Waheguru* :

ਨਾਮ ਰੰਗਿ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 279

Through the love of God's Name, all the peace is gained.

ਸਰਬ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਸੁਖ ਨਿਧਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 290

Lord's Name is the treasure of all the comforts and joys.

ਦੂਖ ਦਰਦ ਨ ਭਉ ਬਿਆਪੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਸਦ ਸੁਖੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 456

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Meditating on the Name man is ever happy, and trouble, pain and fear cling to him not.

ਬਿਪਤਿ ਤਹਾ ਜਹਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਨੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਅਨੰਦ ਜਹ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਹੀ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 197***

Calamity is there, where God's meditation is not.
Millions of joys are, where God's glories are chanted.

ਸੰਤ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ਘਰੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਫਿਰਿ ਨਹੀ ਡੋਲਾਇਆ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 744***

By saints' grace, I have obtained an Eternal Home. Now I am in all-peace and shall not wobble again.

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Naam Simran and Wish fulfillment

(ਨਾਮ ਅਤੇ ਮਨੋਕਾਮਨਾ)

Wish fulfillment pertains to human desires, human demands and human aspirations. It is recorded in the text of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* at several places that the practice of *Naam Simran* leads to the wish fulfillment of a meditative devotee :

ਇਛਾ ਪੂਰਕੁ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ਹਰਿ
ਜਾ ਕੈ ਵਸਿ ਹੈ ਕਾਮਧੇਨਾ ॥
ਸੋ ਐਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਧਿਆਈਐ ਮੇਰੇ ਜੀਅੜੇ
ਤਾ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਵਹਿ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 669*

The Lord is the fulfiller of aspirations and the Giver of all the comforts. In His power is the elysian cow.
So, O my soul, meditate, on such Lord, then alone, shalt thou obtain all the comforts, O my Soul.

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This desire for wish fulfillment can either be for material comforts or for spiritual bliss or for both material and spiritual benefits simultaneously. *Gurmat* or Guru's teachings forbid aspiring for all those comforts which cause harm to human life or human psyche and bring suffering in their wake. The golden rule forbidding such pleasures runs like this :

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਖਾਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਖਾਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 16

O' Brother! ruinous is the happiness of other viand. By eating which the body gets afflicted and sin enters the mind.

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਪੈਨਣੁ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਪੈਧੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 16

O' Brother! the happiness of other raiments is ruinous.
By wearing which the body is ground and wickedness takes possession of the soul.

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਚੜਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਚੜਿਐ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 16

O' Brother! the glee of other rides is ruinous.

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By which mountings the body is pained and sin enters the mind.

ਬਾਬਾ ਹੋਰੁ ਸਉਣਾ ਖੁਸੀ ਖੁਆਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਤੁ ਸੁਤੈ ਤਨੁ ਪੀੜੀਐ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਚਲਹਿ ਵਿਕਾਰ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 17

O' Brother! the pleasure of other rests is pernicious.
By such sleeps the body gets afflicted and the evil deeds over ride the soul.

According to this rule, all those kinds of food, drink, dress, recreation and travel, sleep, luxury are harmful for human health, body and mind which lead to indulgence in vices. So according to *Gurmat,* every deed which damages human health and make human mind to indulge in vices is neither worth asking for nor worthy of wish fulfillment. On the other hand, every kind of comfort which makes human body and human mind more successful and glorious is worth aspiring for and worth fulfillment. For example, *Gurmat* permits every Gursikh to pray for goodness of health, peace of mind, health and happiness for one's family, adequate amount of wealth which is required for meeting the everyday needs of life, for maintenance of a

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respectable standard of living in society and for making a contribution to social welfare. To aspire for the fulfillment of all these constructive desires through the practice of *Naam Simran* is allowed as per the teachings of *Gurbani*. *Naam Simran* proves very beneficial and useful for the fulfillment of all these *Gurmat* permitted positive human desires. To practice *Naam Simran* with the primary motive of getting these noble and positive desires fulfilled brings about starling results :

ਸਭ ਵਡਿਆਈਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਵਿਚਿ
ਹਰਿ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਧਿਆਈਐ ॥
ਜਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਮੰਗੀਐ ਸਾਈ ਪਾਈਐ
ਜੇ ਨਾਮਿ ਚਿਤੁ ਲਾਈਐ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 850*

All the glories are in the Lord's Name, so remember thou thy God's Name, through the Guru.

If man fixes his mind on his God's Name he obtains all the things, he asks for.

ਜੋ ਮਾਗਹਿ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਵਹਿ
ਸੇਵਿ ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਚਰਣ ਰਸਾਇਣ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 714*

Whatever thou askest, that all, thou shalt obtain by serving the Lord's feet, the Abode of delight.

According to this *Gurbani* direction, the best

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way to get one's positive desires fulfilled is to undertake the practice of *Naam Simran* with a firm faith in *Waheguru*'s omnipotence while focusing at the same time on the positive desires which one seeks to be fulfilled. Adopting this technique, a meditative devotee will realize that al his positive wishes are getting fulfilled at the appropriate moment of time. A scientific research would raise a question as to what is the logical link between *Waheguru*'s Naam and human desires? Or why do only positive desires of a meditative devotee are fulfilled through *Naam Simran*.

For this, it must be remembered that we become what we wish or aspire to be. Our final identity or personality is the product of our thoughts, our ability to realize our thoughts and our initiative and drive to implement those thoughts and ideas. It is quite possible that a person may not achieve hundred percent success in his aspirations, but whatever degree of success he achieves it has been mainly motivated by his aspirations. For example, a wealthy person may admit that he is not as wealthy as he wished to be, but he cannot deny that he is wealthy. So whatever modicum of success one achieves in his

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life is the net result of his aspirations, his convictions and his ability. On the other hand, every human being's capability and potential for initiative are also not commensurate with his aspirations. That is why every human beings achievement depends on his aspirations as well as his capacity to implement his aspirations with drive and thrust. As everyone's aspirations, capability and initiative are not equally strong, the Divine laws reward human beings as per the intensity of their aspirations, the level of their competence and their commitment to their ideals.

Practice of *Naam Simran* equips the human mind with concentration. And focused mind is always very strong. Any aspiration born out of a strongly determined mind releases a very strong current of energy which creates conditions for the realization of its cherished desire or aspiration in this visible material world. The aspirations of a practitioner of *Naam Simran* creates such circumstances and brings about such dispensations which prove very favourable for the fulfillment and realization of those wishes.

Practice of *Naam Simran* produces such an

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immense feeling of faith in the omnipotence of *Waheguru* (God) that it leaves no scope for any doubt either about God's grace or about the realization of his genuine aspirations with the guaranteed Grace of God.

ਜੋ ਮਾਗਉ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਵਉ ਅਪਨੇ ਖਸਮ ਭਰੋਸਾ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 619

Whatsoever I ask, that, yea all that I receive, for I have faith in my Master.

When the aspiration is strong and faith in the God's Grace is unshakable, then *Waheguru*, out of His inexhaustible beneficence and magnanimity, grants the necessary initiative and drive for the realization of well-intentioned aspiration. When the aspiration is quite high, but the initiative and ability to realize that aspiration is lacking, then aspiration is not realized so soon. In that situation, *Waheguru* directs the practitioner of *Naam Simran* first to acquire the necessary skill and proficiency, while *Waheguru* provides opportunities to realize that aspiration.

If sometime, the aspiration of a devotee of *Naam Simran* is not fulfilled; he should not feel disappointed and frustrated. He should, rather, make efforts to make up all his handicaps, which

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obstruct the realization of his aspirations. At times, a devotee's mind also misleads him and projects even undesirable and harmful desires in the guise of desirable and beneficial desires. *Waheguru*, being an eternal benefactor and well-wisher of a devotee, does not fulfill devotees' desires immediately or ignores his desires completely because the fulfillment of such desires may not prove to be beneficial for him. Therefore, a devotee should not abandon his routine of *Naam Simran*. He must keep his morale and spirits high, keep following his regimen of *Naam Simran* as well as keep on entertaining his well-intended aspirations. A moment will certainly arrive when either his well-intentioned aspirations will be fully realized, or he will be blessed with higher and even more superior endowments than his own cherished desires.

Nursing well-meaning aspirations during the practice of *Naam Simran* is like the seed of a sapling which will certainly bear fruit with the passage of time :

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਚਰਣੀ ਲਗਿਆ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਤ ਜਪਨੀ ॥
ਜੋ ਇਛੈ ਸੋ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਇਸੀ ਸਭਿ ਘਰੈ ਵਿਚਿ ਜਚਨੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 791

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Clinging to the True Guru's feet, man ever contemplates the Lord's Name.
He obtains the fruit, which he desires and all his wishes are fulfilled in his very home.

ਜੋ ਇਛੈ ਸੋਈ ਫਲੁ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਗਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਮੰਨਿ ਵਸਾਏ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 1148***

Enshrining the Lord's Name within his mind man obtains the fruit which he wishes for.

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Those Who Do Not Practise *Naam Simran*

(ਨਾਮ ਨਾ ਜਪਣਾ)

While innumerable benefits of *Naam Simran* have been recorded in the text of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, there is also a mention of many disadvantages of not practising *Naam Simran*. This article has been particularly written for the knowledge of those who neither practise *Naam Simran* nor do they feel any necessity for meditation and claim to enjoy a high status in the Sikh society.

Majority among the Sikhs do not practise *Naam Simran*. Even the Sikh preachers, religious singers and Sikh leaders do not do any *Naam Simran*. These worthies see no harm in avoiding *Naam Simran*. Many among the *Sikhs* mistake the mere reading of *Gurbani* as *Naam Simran*. Let us

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consider the Sikh Guru's opinion about those who do not do any kind of *Naam Simran.*

ਤੇ ਸਾਕਤ ਚੋਰ ਜਿਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਵਿਸਾਰਿਆ
ਮਨ ਤਿਨ ਕੈ ਨਿਕਟਿ ਨ ਭਿਟੀਐ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 170

Such materialists, who have forgotten the Lord's Name, are thieves. My soul, draw not near them.

ਬਿਰਥਾ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਤਨੁ ਅੰਧ ॥
ਮੁਖਿ ਆਵਤ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਦੁਰਗੰਧ ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦਿਨੁ ਰੈਨਿ ਬ੍ਰਿਥਾ ਬਿਹਾਇ ॥
ਮੇਘ ਬਿਨਾ ਜਿਉ ਖੇਤੀ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 269

Unfruitful is the ignorant man's body without the Name.
From his mouth, foul smell issues forth.
Without Lord's remembrance day and night pass away in vain, as the crop is ruined without rain.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਜਗੁ ਧੰਧਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 358

Without God's Name, the world is but a turmoil.

ਨਾਮਹੀਣ ਗਏ ਮੁੜ ਨੰਗਾ ॥
ਪਚਿ ਪਚਿ ਮੁਏ ਬਿਖੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਪਤੰਗਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 367

Without the Name Divine, the fools depart naked.
Beholding the poison of mammon, they inflame

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and burn to death like a moth.

ਬਿਨੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਕਿਆ ਜੀਵਨਾ ਫਿਟੁ ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਚਤੁਰਾਈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 422

Of what avail is the life without the Name Divine? Detestable and accursed is the cleverness.

ਹਰਿ ਬਿਸਰਤ ਸੋ ਮੁਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 407

He, who has forgotten God, is dead.

ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਭਗਤਿ ਨ ਰਿਦੈ ਸਾਚਾ ਸੇ ਅੰਤਿ ਧਾਹੀ ਰੁੰਨਿਆ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 439

They whose mind contains not God's True Name and devotion, bewail loudly in the end.

ਜਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਊਚਰਹਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਨਾਵੈ ਰਸ ਖਾਹਿ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਏਵੈ ਜਾਣੀਐ ਤਿਤੁ ਮੁਖਿ ਥੁਕਾ ਪਾਹਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 473

The mouth, which utters not the Name and without the Name, eats delicacies, consider it like this, O Nanak, as if that mouth is spat upon.

ਪਸੂ ਮਿਲਹਿ ਚੰਗਿਆਈਆ ਖੜੁ ਖਾਵਹਿ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਦੇਹਿ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 489

The beasts have merits, as they eat grass and give milk.

ਨਾਮ ਵਿਹੂਣੇ ਆਦਮੀ ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਜੀਵਣ ਕਰਮ ਕਰੇਹਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 489

Without the Name, accursed is man's life and

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the acts he performs.

ਕੋਟਿ ਬਿਘਨ ਤਿਸੁ ਲਾਗਤੇ ਜਿਸ ਨੋ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਨਾਉ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਬਿਲਪਤੇ ਜਿਉ ਸੁੰਞੈ ਘਰਿ ਕਾਉ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 522

Millions of obstacles come in the way of him, who forgets the Name.
He croaks, night and day, O Nanak, like a crow in an empty house.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸੁੰਦਰਿ ਹੈ ਨਕਟੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 528

Bereft of the God's Name, the beauteous is ugly as the nose-chopped.

ਊਚੇ ਮੰਦਰ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਨਾਰੀ ॥
ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਾਜੀ ਹਾਰੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 659

One may acquire palatial mansions and beauteous spouses.
Yet may lose the (life's) game without God's Name.

ਨਾਮ ਧਨ ਬਿਨੁ ਹੋਰ ਸਭ ਬਿਖੁ ਜਾਣੁ ॥
ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹਿ ਜਲੈ ਅਭਿਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 664

Without the Name, deem all other riches as poison.
The egoist burns in the fire of worldly love.

ਜਿਨ ਹਰਿ ਹਿਰਦੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਬਸਿਓ
ਤਿਨ ਮਾਤ ਕੀਜੈ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਂਝਾ ॥
ਤਿਨ ਸੁੰਞੀ ਦੇਹ ਫਿਰਹਿ ਬਿਨੁ ਨਾਵੈ

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ਓਇ ਖਪਿ ਖਪਿ ਮੁਏ ਕਰਾਂਝਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 697

O Lord Master, the mothers of those, within whose mind, the Name Divine abides not, ought to have been sterile.

Their forlorn bodies wander about without the Name and they waste their lives and die crying.

ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨੁ ਝੂਠੇ ਸਗਲ ਪਾਸਾਰੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 694

Without the Lord's Name, all the ostentations are in vain.

ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸੇਜ ਅਨੇਕ ਸੁਖ ਰਸ ਭੋਗਣ ਪੂਰੇ ॥
ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਸੋਇਨ ਚੰਦਨ ਸੁਗੰਧ ਲਾਇ ਮੋਤੀ ਹੀਰੇ ॥
ਮਨ ਇਛੇ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਣਦਾ ਕਿਛੁ ਨਾਹਿ ਵਿਸੂਰੇ ॥
ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਚਿਤਿ ਨ ਆਵਈ ਵਿਸਟਾ ਕੇ ਕੀਰੇ ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਨ ਸਾਂਤਿ ਹੋਇ ਕਿਤੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਮਨੁ ਧੀਰੇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 707

A man may enjoy a beautcous couch, numerous pleasures and all sorts of enjoyments;
And may posses mansions of gold studded with pearls and rubies and plastered with fragrant sandal dust;
He may further enjoy his heart-desired pleasures and have no anxiety whatever, but, if he remembers not that Lord, he is like a worm in ordure.

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Without God's Name, there is no peace. In what other way can the soul be comforted?

ਰਾਜ ਮਿਲਖ ਧਨ ਜੋਬਨਾ ਨਾਮੈ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਾਦਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 810

Without the Name Divine, dominions, property, riches and youth are all vain.

The above quoted words of *Guru Granth Sahib* prove that while the *Sikh Gurus* highly eulogise the practitioners of *Naam Simran*. They have a very poor opinion about the non-practitioners of *Naam Simran*. The greatest virtue in *Sikhism* and *Sikh* religion is the practice of *Naam Simran*. Whereas the practice of *Naam Simran* makes a *Gursikh* the most virtuous, lack of it makes him the most depraved. *Naam Simran* in Sikhism is the best touchstone, the best identification and the best admiration of a *Gursikh*. The tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh declares him a real & pure Sikh (the Khalsa) who always meditates on God's Naam :

ਜਾਗਤ ਜੋਤਿ ਜਪੈ ਨਿਸ ਬਾਸੁਰ ਏਕ ਬਿਨਾ ਮਨ ਨੇਕ ਨ ਆਨੈ॥

He is the true Khalsa who meditates on God's Name day and night,
Who does not repose his faith in any other deity except God.

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The *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* teaches us that a *Gursikh* who does *Naam Simran* launches on a spiritual pilgrimage and receives all the blessings of *Waheguru*. On the other hand, a person averse to *Naam Simran* slides down the divinely disapproved direction and harms his own interest. Even if a Gursikh is non-committal or neutral towards the adequacy or otherwise of *Naam Simran*, he should pay attention to the teachings of *Guru Granth Sahib*. A man without *Naam Simran* is committing the most stringent violation of *Guru Granth Sahib's* teachings and causing maximum harm to his own interests. He is simply wasting away his life. There is a scientific explanation for the greatest applause of *Naam Simran* devotee and the stringent condemnation for a person without *Naam Simran*. Guru's teachings lead a devotee to harmonise his soul with the eternal divine power; guides him to practise *Naam Simran* for his ultimate harmonization with the Divine. *Naam Simran* takes a devotee's consciousness as if on its wings, to the heavenly abode of *Waheguru* where a devotee gets further soaked and saturated with faith and becomes an image of the Divine. Getting

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completely acquainted with the Divine attributes, the devotee himself acquires those attributes and becomes indistinguishable from the Divine. On the other hand, it is impossible for a person, devoid of *Naam Simran*, to have even a glimpse of the Divine, leave aside his harmonization with the divine. That is why the Sikh Gurus regard *Naam Simran* as indispensable for Gursikhs. There is no greater violation or human blunder than not doing *Naam Simran* :

ਮਿਲੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਅਪਨਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਦੇਹੁ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਅਸਨੇਹੁ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਜੋ ਪਹਿਰੈ ਖਾਇ ॥
ਜਿਉ ਕੂਕਰ ਲੂਠਨ ਮਹਿ ਪਾਇ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਜੇਤਾ ਬਿਉਹਾਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਉ ਮਿਰਤਕ ਮਿਥਿਆ ਸੀਗਾਰੁ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਬਿਸਾਰਿ ਕਰੇ ਰਸ ਭੋਗ ॥
ਸੁਖੁ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਨਹੀ ਤਨ ਮਹਿ ਰੋਗ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਨਾਮੁ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਕਰੇ ਅਨ ਕਾਜ ॥
ਬਿਨਸਿ ਜਾਇ ਝੂਠੇ ਸਭਿ ਪਾਜ ॥ ੪ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਨ ਲਾਵੈ ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਤੋ ਨਰਕਿ ਜਾਵੈ ॥ ੫ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਿਨਿ ਮਨਿ ਨ ਆਰਾਧਾ ॥
ਚੋਰ ਕੀ ਨਿਆਈ ਜਮ ਪੁਰਿ ਬਾਧਾ ॥ ੬ ॥
ਲਾਖ ਅਡੰਬਰ ਬਹੁਤੁ ਬਿਸਥਾਰਾ ॥

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ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਝੂਠੇ ਪਾਸਾਰਾ ॥ ੭ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਸੋਈ ਜਨੁ ਲੇਇ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਸੁ ਦੇਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 240

Meet me O my World-Lord, bestow on me Thy Name.
Blasted and blighted is the love which is without Divine Name.Pause.
Without God's Name, he, who wears and eats is like a dog, who feeds on impure left overs.
Sans the Name Divine the entire business is futile as the decoration of a corpse.
Forgetting the Name Divine, he, who indulges in revelments has no peace even in dream and his body becomes diseased.
Abandoning Lord's Name, if man engages in other occupations, the whole of his false gilding would fall off.
The man, who embraces not affection for the Name Divine goes to hell even though he perform millions of ceremonial rites.
He who remembers not God's Name in his heart, is bound like a thief in the city of death.
Lacs of ostentations and great extensions,
Without God's Name, false are the displays.
That man alone repeats God's Name, to whom, O

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Nanak, He mercifully grants this.

ਜਿਨੀ ਐਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨ ਚੇਤਿਓ
ਸੇ ਕਾਹੇ ਜਗਿ ਆਏ ਰਾਮ ਰਾਜੇ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਮਾਣਸ ਜਨਮੁ ਦੁਲੰਭੁ ਹੈ
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਸਭੁ ਜਾਏ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 450*

Those, who do not meditate on Name Divine, why have they come to this world?
Very difficult to obtain is this human birth and without the Name, it all goes in vain.

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The Daily Routine

(ਰੋਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੋਗਰਾਮ)

During one of my visits, I came across a few friends who told me that they wished to meditate and do *Naam Simran* and participate in the discussions on religion, but their worldly affairs keep them so much occupied that they are left with hardly any time to meditate and do *Naam Simran*. These friends do not find any time available for meditation and *Naam Simran* because they do not give the same priority to this most sacred activity as they do to their material occupations. These worthy friends are not aware how closely are *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran* related to their success in their worldly pursuits. If they are made to realize that their outward worldly activity is just a shadow of their inner spiritual and psychic thought and mindset and that by

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streamlining one's thought process one can streamline one's outer activity as well, then they will surely become aware of the beneficial aspects of *Naam Simran* and *Gurbani*.

This category of persons are desperately busy in achieving happiness and contentment without the assistance of *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran*. But they can never achieve happiness, as the greatest spiritual saints have opined. How can they be happy then? They are searching desperately for peace and happiness among their material pursuits without experiencing these two boons in their innermost thoughts and experiences. Peace and happiness do not come out of excessive worldly pursuits as is recorded in *Gurbani* :

ਸੁਖੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਬਹੁਤੈ ਧਨਿ ਖਾਟੇ ॥
ਸੁਖੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਪੇਖੇ ਨਿਰਤਿ ਨਾਟੇ ॥
ਸੁਖੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਬਹੁ ਦੇਸ ਕਮਾਏ ॥
ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਗਾਏ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1147*

There is no peace in earning much wealth.
There is no peace in beholding dance and drama.
There is no bliss in conquering many countries.
All the pleasures are obtained by hymning the Lord's praises.

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ਸੁਖ ਸਹਜ ਆਨੰਦ ਲਹਹੁ ॥
ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਹਹੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1147

O man, attain thou unto peace, poise and bliss, obtaining the saints' society through good fortune; utter thou the Lord God's Name by the Guru's grace.

Man always yearns for his own welfare, eternal happiness and physical well-being or good health. The underlying wish or tendency of human beings beneath their human activities is the desire to be happy, healthy and self-reliant. But every person tries to achieve these goals according to his own awareness and comprehension. Man devotes his time and efforts only to those pursuits which, he thinks and expects, can bring about happiness and comfort.

When a *Gursikh*, who believes in the *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib*, is convinced that permanent happiness, peace and bliss can only be achieved through *Naam Simran* and reflection on *Gurbani*'s teachings, then alone *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran* become indispensable for his life. Then his priorities change. Reading and reflection over *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran* become his priorities in

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his daily routine of activities.

Permanent eternal happiness, bliss and comfort are the goals of a student of spiritual science. These blessings are attained through concentration and meditation on God's Name through the medium of *Gurbani*. Therefore, meditation or *Naam Simran* become top priorities in the daily life of a *GurSikh*. Good health and sense of physical well-being are the next priorities in his life. A man, with a good health and physical fitness, can concentrate and meditate in a better way. Earning one's livelihood through earnest and fair means is the third priority for a *GurSikh*. Social interaction and establishment of good human and social relationships becomes his next priority. Legitimate recreation and entertainment form his last and fifth priority.

If one starts following this routine, then *Naam Simran* and *Gurbani* become his top priorities and he never fails to perform these two most important activities. He will cut short other priorities such as physical recreation and social interaction without ever missing his top priority of meditation. These days, we give the position

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of least priority to *Naam Simran* and *Gurbani* in our daily routine. We tend to omit this vital activity from our daily routine whenever we get excessively occupied in our worldly pursuits.

It is the common experience of spiritual devotees that we remain more cheerful and perform better in our daily worldly activities during the day if we are able to concentrate and meditate early in the morning. On the contrary, a day beginning without practising *Naam Simran* and *Gurbani* meditation results in poor performance and even negative consequences during the remaining day's activity.

This fact, that success in life depends on spiritual cultivation and successful harnessing of spiritual power, should encourage us to practise reflection on *Gurbani* teachings and *Naam Simran* on a daily basis to make our daily routine more enjoyable and result oriented.

Given below is a list of priorities for students of spiritual science who wish to achieve higher goals in spiritual bliss through the medium of *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran* :

(i) Deep concentration and understanding of

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Gurbani and *Naam Simran*

(ii) Maintenance of good health and physical fitness

(iii) Earning one's livelihood through just and fair means

(iv) Healthy social interaction and development of human relationships.

(v) Harmless, legitimate recreation and entertainment

After moulding oneself into such a daily routine, it is impossible that one finds no time for *Gurbani* reflection and meditation.

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The Daily Recitation of *Gurbani*

(ਰੋਜ਼ਾਨਾ ਪਾਠ)

Some educated persons question the relevance or utility of reciting the same *Gurbani* text every day. In their opinion, once one has read a particular text of *Gurbani*, there is no point in repeating it everyday. Without analyzing the benefit of repetitive recitation of *Gurbani*, they declare that those who recite *Gurbani* everyday even after its understanding of meaning, are either very conservative, compulsively repetitive, or mentally immature simpletons or down right fundamentalists. We will come across such opinionated people in thousands these days. Many professors in the *Sikh* institutions and political leaders subscribe to such a view about *Gurbani*. They consider that reading a newspaper rather than reciting *Gurbani* in the morning is more profitable and watching a movie in the

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evening is better than repeating the same evening *Sikh* prayer daily.

We would try to present a few points of view about the usefulness and the underlying philosophy behind the daily recitation of same *Gurbani* text like the *Japji* or the *Rehras* in order to remove certain misconceptions about the repetitive recitation from the minds of educated people.

It is my firm belief but a conviction based on personal experience that repetitive recitation of *Gurbani* done with concentration helps in cleansing and increasing the power of concentration of human mind. It has been widely observed that the human mind keeps on wasting its mental energy on diverse things. It is never focussed and concentrated on any particular object unless it is trained and controlled to focus. The thoughts and ideas bombarding the human mind are innumerable and of divergent nature. This multiplicity and divergence of thoughts keeps us restless and tense. All kinds of tension, anxiety, and fears keep on gripping human mind because mind keeps on entertaining diverse kinds of

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thoughts and ideas all the time. The more it entertains diverse thoughts, the more restless and disturbed it gets.

If a man could learn the technique of controlling his thought process and channelise and focus his mental energy into a particularly chosen subject or object, then his mind can become "a fountain head of harmony and peace." The repetitive daily recitation of *Gurbani* and *Naam Simran* or meditation proves very helpful in controlling mental thought and increasing one's power of concentration and focusing on one's mental energy.

If one starts reciting the text of *Sukhmani* or *Rehras* in a noise-free atmosphere of solitude, then one's mind will get emptied of diverse thought waves entering into the mind and get focused on understanding the meaning of *Gurbani* text and get tuned with the musical rhythm of the *Gurbani*. If this practice is repeated everyday with concentration, it will start becoming an enjoyable experience everyday. One starts looking for the fixed moment or time allotted to prayer and *Gurbani* recitation. *Gurbani* recitation during

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prayer constitutes a triple activity – the activity of verbal recitation, careful listening and comprehension of the recited words; all happening simultaneously and in harmony. In other words, human tongue speaks, ears listen and mind comprehends. This triple activity influences human thought and human psyche or consciousness. Under this influence, the mind rejecting the diverse thought waves coming from outside, starts concentrating on *Gurbani* recitation and *Naam Simran*. Getting out of imaginary world created by the outside mental thought waves and stimuli, man enters the world created by *Gurbani* recitation. The entrance into this spiritual world provides him peace and bliss superseding ordinary happiness.

According to the principles of sound, a particular sound produced time and again in a regular pattern produces a rhythm and music of its own. All music systems of the world have been evolved out of this repetitive rhythm of various sounds. What are our own songs made of? These are nothing but rhythmic repetition of certain sounds. The same principle holds good for the *Gurbani*. Recitation of *Gurbani* injects spiritual and

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virtuous thoughts into our consciousness through the medium of rhythmical music of its poetic words. Hearing these words and comprehending the thoughtful import of these words, our consciousness gets rid of the diverse other thought waves produced by worldly objects and learns to repose in a blissful world created by *Gurbani* recitation.

God resides in our own consciousness. We can get a clear glimpse of Him inside us. But we can have this glimpse of the Divine inside us only when we have mastered the technique of watching the inner psychic thoughts produced by *Gurbani* recitation much as we have learnt to see objects of the external world created by mental thought waves. Our mind or consciousness needs a distinctive kind of practice, dress-rehearsal and training which can teach us the art of introspection and methodology to have a glimpse into our inner spiritual world. This activity of introspection and spiritual glimpse will not begin until we learn to concentrate and meditate. *Gurbani* recommends three-way path to acquire the art of concentration and meditation. This three-fold pathway consists of recitation of *Gurbani* with faith and devotion;

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listening to musical recitation of *Gurbani* (*Kirtan*) with concentration and *Naam-Simran*. A devotee, who volunteers to undergo this three-fold training, he can surely have a glimpse of the Divine inside his own self or consciousness even in this morally obtuse age of *kaliyuga*. A glimpse of the Divine unfolds the whole mystery of existence to a devotee.

Repetition leads to Harmony;

Harmony leads to peace;

Peace leads to God.

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Art of *Naam Simran* or Meditation

(ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣ ਦਾ ਤਰੀਕਾ)

Question : Which place is suitable for *Naam Simran*?

Answer : Although every place is suitable for *Naam Simran* after a lot of practice, but a place free from noise but full of solitude is necessary for meditation. Any place, full of peace and solitude is suitable for *Naam Simran*. Mind concentrates and meditates better near the bank of a river, a lake or a sea-shore situated away from the maddening world of noise and human activity. These peaceful locations are ideal for *Naam Simran*.

One must allot one particular room for doing *Naam Simran*. This room should contain nothing

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else except the text of *Guru Granth Sahib* duly installed and a few other meditational aids. It has been observed that portraits of spiritual saints, flowers, perfumes, incense in such a room lend a spiritual ambience to meditation and *Naam Simran*.

To start with, one must start the practice of meditation while sitting on a ground in the erect posture. A simple mattress, rather than cushioned rugs, should be used for sitting on the ground.

Question : Do we need to follow a particular technique to do meditation and *Naam Simran*.

Answer : To begin with, we must adopt the following technique for meditation and *Naam Simran*.

First, make a verbal articulation for the welfare of whole humanity *"Sarbat Da Bhala"*, a number of times.

Second, feel and experience in your own mind that these vibrations denoting best wishes for the welfare of whole humanity are emanating from your whole self.

If one feels disturbed or insecure with one's

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eyes closed during meditation, then one should look with half-closed eyes on a bunch of flowers or any other sacred object and recite some short monosyllabic scriptural words with one's tongue. The first stanza from *Japji* or *Sukhmani* or the single word *'Waheguru'* can also be recited repeatedly. It is better to recite these words slowly, silently and in a dim voice, but if one is not able to concentrate in silence or low voice, then one should recite in a loud voice so that the voice is audible to one's own ears.

A spiritual devotee during an early stage of meditation should aim at the repetitive recitation of the word *"Waheguru"* after beginning with a *Gurbani* recitation. Gradually, this verbal recitation should lead to a silent meditation or meditation at the mental level minus the verbal recitation. The ultimate goal is meditation on the name of *"Waheguru"* in one's mind. But beginning has to be made with a verbal recitation. At a later stage after a lot of practice, meditation starts taking place in the mind automatically.

But one's attention must remain focused on the vibration or sound of *"Waheguru"* emanating

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form one's tongue in the earlier stage and from the mind at the latter mature stage of mediation. Eliminating all other thoughts and concerns, one must keep one's attention focussed on the vibration of *Waheguru*'s Name coming out of one's tongue or mental articulation. It is also useful to recite the word "*Waheguru*" with the telling of each bead of a rosary. A half an hour's practice everyday with complete concentration for a few months elevates the meditation level from the verbal plane to the mental plane.

One must remain humble but motivated during meditation.

Question : What is the most appropriate time for *Naam Simran*?

Answer : There are no constraints of time and place for an experienced and seasoned practitioner of meditation or *Naam Simran*. But early hours of the morning, the ambrosial hour "*Amrit Wela*" just before dawn, or dusk time and a little after midnight expedite and enhance the spiritual efficacy of meditation. It does not mean that no other time is appropriate for meditation except these three specific time periods. Whatever

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period of time suits a devotee or whenever he gets free from his worldly pursuits, it is also suitable for meditation. A tired, fatigued body invites sleep and creates obstacles in meditation. Therefore, it is more useful to meditate after getting from a deep sound sleep and ablutions.

After one had mastered the technique of *Naam Simran*, meditation becomes automatic and continues even during an awakened state, state of sleep, and rest of the time. But one can attain this stage only after a practice of *Naam Simran* for years. It is not possible to achieve this stage just after reading a few books about meditation and spirituality.

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Sikh (Gurmat) Way of *Naam Simran*

(ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਅਨੁਸਾਰ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣਾ)

All the religions insist on meditation. All the religions are in favour of meditation or *Naam Simran* in one way or another. The Muslims, The Christians, The Hindus and The *Sikhs* have been practising meditation with different types of rosary.

The art of meditation or *Naam Simran* is gradually on the decline among the followers of all the religions. These days spiritually enlighted persons are very rarely found in the modern world. Why is this practice of *Naam Simran* on the decline especially when all the scriptures of all the religions insist on the practice of *Naam Simran* and point out the benefits and significance of this spiritual activity Why do people, belonging to all

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the religions, not practise meditation? Why do majority of the people deprive themselves of this most valuable boon?

There seem to be some reasons responsible for this human tendency. First, all ancient scriptures state the benefits of meditation but do not explain the scientific reasons behind the meditational activity. Why is *Naam Simran* so much beneficial? Why is *Naam Simran* most significant? Lack of scientific explanation of the *Naam Simran* activity has created an impression that *Naam Simran* and its beneficial effects are nothing but the figments of imagination of the ancient saints and are mere superstition. They find no scientific evidence in this activity. Some people have started regarding it as an act of sycophancy, placation or flattery of the Divine. The reason for forming such an opinion about *Naam Simran* is lack of knowledge or ignorance about the scientific knowledge about the Divine identity which is as eternally true and verifiable as the simple mathematical fact of two plus two being equal to four. The second reason for the decline in the practice of *Naam Simran* is that this activity is extremely strenuous and mechanical. In

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the sphere of academic and educational activity, the earlier, elementary stages are easier than the advanced stages. But in the spiritual and meditational activity, the early or the first stage is the most strenuous than the later stages. The advanced stages in the spiritual field are more interesting and fascinating than the earlier stage. The fact is that the advanced stages of *Naam Simran* prove to be full of effortless spontaneity and eternal bliss for the practitioner of *Naam Simran*. It becomes very painful to abandon *Naam Simran* for a seasoned practitioner of *Naam Simran* even for a short interval. Since the earlier stages of *Naam Simran* are very strenuous and challenging, only very rare individuals succeed in crossing these earlier stages with patience and steadfastness.

To be successful in this strenuous activity of *Naam Simran,* it is necessary that we are scientifically convinced of the benefits of *Naam Simran*. Whenever we think of any object, its visual image, with all its merits and demerits, gets created in our mind. Both these aspects, positive as well as negative of the created image, influence and shape our mind or thought process.

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A thought about a snake creates an image of a snake in the mind. Its horrifying image and its poisonous qualities create a feeling of fear psychosis in our mind and affects our opinion about the snake. Similarly, mention of a friend's name and repeated references to his name create a visual image of his personality in our mind. All his drawbacks, his helpful temperament, his favours done to us, influence our mind and produce an urge in us to meet him once again. This is the scientific process behind every act of memory or thought intrusion into our mind. Whosoever or whatsoever we remember or think about, a visual image of that identity gets created on our mental screen. This created image, starts influencing and shaping our mind or our thought process. But this influence or moulding of our thought is directly proportional to our knowledge about that entity, be it a person or an abstract entity. The more intense or higher the content of our knowledge about an entity, the greater the influence and greater the moulding of our mind or thought process.

It is, therefore, very necessary that we are very well acquainted with the qualities, attributes

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and blessings of the Divine. The more well-acquainted we are with the Divine attributes, the greater the imaginative image and the greater the divine influence on us during the activity of *Naam Simran* and greater the rate of our moulding towards spirituality and Divinity. It is scientifically verifiable fact that the greater the devotee's knowledge about Divine attributes, the greater the influence of the Divine on him and the greater is the rate of his moulding into spirituality and Divinity.

It is, therefore, very necessary to be successful in the *Naam Simran* activity so that its practitioner has the optimum knowledge about the Divine attributes and His identity, abstract though it is. This knowledge is gained through the intensive reading of scriptures and comprehending their meaning and philosophy. Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* has innumerable hymns in its text which explain the various beneficial attributes of the Divine. A thorough understanding of these attributes leads to a thorough knowledge about the Divine and His abstract identity. When a thoroughly enlighted person undertakes *Naam Simran* with faith and

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concentration, he will be thoroughly influenced by the Divine attributes and this influence will mould him into a person with similar attributes because a devotee has realized that there is nobody as great, almighty, omnipresent, eternal, generous and compassionate, just and fair as *Waheguru*, the Divine. A devotee himself becomes as Divine as *Waheguru* Himself is, after a practice of *Naam Simran* for years :

ਨਿਰਭਉ ਜਪੈ ਸਗਲ ਭਉ ਮਿਟੈ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 293***

By meditating on the Fearless Lord, all the fear departs.

ਸੋ ਐਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਐ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ
ਜੋ ਸਭਨਾ ਉਪਰਿ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਚਲਾਏ ॥
ਸੋ ਐਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੀਐ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ
ਜੋ ਅੰਤੀ ਅਉਸਰਿ ਲਏ ਛਡਾਏ ॥
ਸੋ ਐਸਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪੀਐ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ
ਜੁ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਸਭ ਭੁਖ ਗਵਾਏ ॥
ਸੋ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿਆ ਵਡਭਾਗੀ
ਤਿਨ ਨਿੰਦਕ ਦੁਸਟ ਸਭਿ ਪੈਰੀ ਪਾਏ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਰਾਧਿ ਸਭਨਾ ਤੇ ਵਡਾ
ਸਭਿ ਨਾਵੈ ਅਗੈ ਆਣਿ ਨਿਵਾਏ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 89***

My Soul! remember thou that, such, Name of God, who rules over all.
My Soul! repeat thou that, such, Name of God, which shall drive out all thy mind's desires and

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hungers.
Through the Guru the very fortunate fellow ponders on the Name, which makes all the slanderers and sinners fall at His feet.
Nanak, do thou deliberate over the most Exalted Name of God, before which Name all come and kneel down.

After being fully acquainted with the nature and identity and attributes of the Divine, all His Divine attributes start reflecting in our own personality if we meditate on His Name with faith, devotion and concentration. We are then truly cast in the image of the Divine. This is the way of *Naam Simran* according to *Sikh* philosophy (*Gurmat*) :

ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਮਨ ਮੇਰੇ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 264***
O my soul, through the Guru, utter the Name of God.

If we meditate and practise *Naam Simran* in the *Sikh* prescribed way, *Naam Simran* is neither strenuous nor insipid or mechanical. It goes on becoming fascinating and blissful.

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Where Does Naam Reside?

(ਨਾਮ ਦਾ ਨਿਵਾਸ)

God's Name does not reside in a mind or consciousness which remains always occupied by worldly affairs and egoism. Human consciousness, in order to become an abode of *Waheguru*'s sacred Name, must first become worthy of being His abode. As a soil saturated with sodium nitrate is unfit for every kind of vegetational growth, similarly a mind occupied with mundane, materialistic thoughts and egoistic feelings is not a suitable place for *Waheguru*'s Name :

ਹਉਮੈ ਨਾਵੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਵਿਰੋਧੁ ਹੈ ਦੁਇ ਨ ਵਸਹਿ ਇਕ ਠਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 560

Ego is at variance with the Name : the two dwell not in one place.

As a piece of land, divested of excess of

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sodium nitrate, can become fit for cultivation, likewise, a mind, emptied of egoism and pride, and invested with the teachings of *Gurbani*, can be worthy of cultivation of *Waheguru*'s Name. A few basic postulations of egoism are : The physical body belongs to me; the mind inside my body also belongs to me; whatever material assets in the form of wealth, bunglows, cars, orchards and other family assets I possess, I have earned with the joint efforts of my body, also belong to me. I am the owner of all these material assets. I am the sole possessor of all intelligence and brilliance in my mind and the muscular energy in my physical body.

A proper analysis and reflection over these statements will reveal that these beliefs are mere illusions and misconceptions. Such formulations are neither scientific nor true. The physical body does not belong to us. It has been created by *Waheguru* and granted to us for use for a definite period of time. We are not capable of creating a tiny part of our mind. It is also God's creation and has been lent to us for use for a specific period of time. We are not allowed to own both these two gifts of God (body and mind) for an

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indefinite period. As we are not capable of creating these two items, we can also not keep these two things forever. We are allowed the utilization of these two organs or faculties so long as God's Will permits us to utilize these. We can own and utilize human body till God's Will permits us its use.

So when we are not the owner of our body and mind but their tenants or lessees as per God's Will, how can we be the owners of all the material assets and our family created by the joint utilization of God-given body and mind. These material assets also belong to God who has created our body and mind. Similarly, all the intelligence, shrewdness, wisdom which exist in the human mind are also God-given gifts. It is God's Will and His blessings which provide us with all the opportunities to utilize our faculties and achieve success. Man has no role in the creation of human faculties and their successful utilization. There is nothing of our own in these sources and their utilization. This is the viewpoint and message of *Gurbani* about our body, mind and their utilization. This viewpoint is scientific as well as the only truth.

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ਮਨੁ ਤਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਧਨੁ ਭੀ ਤੇਰਾ ॥
ਤੂੰ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਸੁਆਮੀ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਮੇਰਾ ॥
ਜੀਉ ਪਿੰਡੁ ਸਭੁ ਰਾਸਿ ਤੁਮਾਰੀ
ਤੇਰਾ ਜੋਰੁ ਗੋਪਾਲਾ ਜੀਉ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 106

My soul and body are Thine, my wealth too is Thine.
Thou art my Lord Master Husband.
My life and body are all Thy capital, and my power is from Thee, O' the world cherisher!

Unless these egoistic beliefs of man being the sole owner of body, mind and material assets, change into a belief of humanity which regards all these assets as blessings of God, God's Name can not reside in the mind or consciousness of man.

Man's second belief is that he is the son of human parents. A proper analysis will reveal that this belief is also a misconception. Parents are only a biological channel for the birth of a child but the child does not belong to them. The child belongs to God. Parents hardly know when the child is conceived in the mother's body. They come to know only later on after sometime that *Waheguru*/nature is building something in the mother's womb. But what God is building, it is not known to the parents. It is *Waheguru* and His

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Divine energy which creates and gives shape to the child's little hands, feet, the contours on these tiny limbs, makes eyes, and other organs in the mother's womb. When the child's body is completed, it is suffused with life in the womb by *Waheguru*. All this mysterious activity continues without the knowledge of parents. They hardly know how this activity has been going on.

Therefore, it is wrong to claim that the child belongs to the human parents after its birth. The child belongs to *Waheguru*. Parents have been utilized as a channel to bring this child into the world by *Waheguru*.

Man's third belief is that he has to maintain this body and keep it alive and permanent and earn his livelihood with the utilization of his body and feed his family with his hard-earned income. He believes that if he does not earn money, then his family will starve and perish. All human beings are running a rat race in search of opportunities for earning their livelihood. Those who are affluent are worried that their wealth may not finish and their family may not starve. So they keep on amassing more wealth for their family and their future progeny.

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Waheguru's Name cannot reside in the hearts and minds of such material-minded people. On the contrary, *Gurbani* and its philosophy (*Gurmat*) believes scientifically and truly that *Waheguru* is the provider of livelihood. The eternal provider *Waheguru* provides livelihood and sustenance to all the creatures of the universe. Man belongs to and is included in this great fraternity of God-created creatures. As God provides nourishment to the creatures living in water and in the sky, similarly God provides livelihood to human beings as well. Man should not feel worried about his livelihood :

ਨਾਨਕ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਮਤਿ ਕਰਹੁ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਤਿਸ ਹੀ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਜਲ ਮਹਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਇਅਨੁ ਤਿਨਾ ਭਿ ਰੋਜੀ ਦੇਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 955

Nanak, be thou not anxious for thy maintenance. The anxiety is for Him.
He has created creatures in water; Them too He gives sustenance.

ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ॥
ਸਾਹਿਬੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਿਹਰਵਾਨੁ ॥
ਜੀਅ ਸਗਲ ਕਉ ਦੇਇ ਦਾਨੁ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਤੂ ਕਾਹੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾਇਸਿ ਤੂ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 724

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Merciful, merciful is the Lord. Merciful is my Master.
He blesses ail the beings with His bounties.
Pause.
Why waverest thou, O mortal.
The Creator Himself shall protect Thee.
He, who gave thee birth, will also provide thee with sustenance.

So long as man remains worried about his livelihood,. God's Name cannot reside in his consciousness. *Waheguru* will reside in that consciousness alone which has a firm faith in the preserving qualities of God.

It is one thing to make efforts for earning one's livelihood, but it is entirely another thing to feel worried about one's livelihood. *Gurbani* inspires a person to make efforts to earn his livelihood but prohibits him from getting worried about it. A devout faithful *GurSikh* makes genuine efforts to earn his bread or for any social goal without becoming unnecessarily worried and scared about its fulfillment. He keeps *Waheguru's* Name and His eternal identity of being a preserver in his consciousness even while earning

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his livelihood. Therefore, his efforts are completely earnest and motivated but without any iota of anxiety or scarce.

The misconception in man's mind is that he has to live in this world forever and all his material assets and relationships such as bunglows, wealth, family, friends and other relations are also eternal. But *Gurbani*'s philosophy and its scientific message is that both man and the material world that he has created around him are mortal. World and life are continuously in a process of change and flux and man is a traveller in this continuously changing world. *Gurbani* states that birds of diverse species come and spend a night together on the branches of a tree and fly away in the morning. In the same way, human beings, from their earlier lives enter this world of today, live together for sometime and establish bonds of human relations in the form of parents, offsprings, relatives and friends. But they depart from this place after sometime.

Gurbani's scientific message is that man's journey in this world is a dream that does not

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last long. As the dream and its world disappears on waking up from sleep, similarly this life and the dream-like world also disappears as man's eyes are closed by the death of human body :

ਜੈਸਾ ਸੁਪਨਾ ਰੈਨਿ ਕਾ ਤੈਸਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 808

As is the night's dream, so is this transient world.

A person who does not lead his life, taking life as a short span of dream as revealed by *Gurbani,* his mind or consciousness can never be an abode of *Waheguru*'s Name. *Waheguru* resides only in that mind which considers human being a traveller and his life a short journey.

These are the few fundamental postulates of *Gurbani*. Unless a man adopts these postulates in his mental make up and leads his life based on these postulates, he can not be a worthy recipient of God's Name and grace.

If a *GurSikh* wants that God's sacred Name should reside in his mind and consciousness, he should live his life based on the postulates of *Gurbani*. He must endeavour to be worthy to make his consciousness a fitting abode for *Waheguru*'s Name.

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When *Waheguru*'s Name starts residing in his consciousness, then his life's journey becomes joyful and comfortable :

ਜਾ ਕੈ ਹਰਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਮਨ ਮਾਹੀ ॥
ਤਾ ਕਉ ਦੁਖੁ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਭੀ ਨਾਹੀ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 193*

He in whose heart God abides, gets not pain even in dream.

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Misconceptions About *Naam Simran*

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਭੁਲੇਖੇ)

ਜਬ ਇਸ ਤੇ ਸਭ ਬਿਨਸੇ ਭਰਮਾ ॥
ਭੇਦੁ ਨਾਹੀ ਹੈ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 235*

When all the doubts are removed from him, there remains no difference between him and the Supreme Lord.

It is very difficult, if not impossible, to accomplish a task and succeed in it if one begins that task with all kinds of doubts, misconceptions and objections in one's mind about its accomplishment. As a ship riddled with gaping holes in its bottom can not cross an ocean, similarly a person, having all kinds of doubts, misconceptions about life, can not succeed in his life :

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ਡੀਗਨ ਡੋਲਾ ਤਉ ਲਉ ਜਉ ਮਨ ਕੇ ਭਰਮਾ ॥
ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕਾਟੇ ਗੁਰਿ ਆਪਣੈ ਪਾਏ ਬਿਸਰਾਮਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 400

As long as there are doubts in the mind, till then, man falls and staggers.
When my Guru removed my doubts, I obtained rest.

ਭਰਮਿ ਭਰਮਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਡਹਕਾਏ ॥
ਦੁਤਰ ਮਹਾ ਬਿਖਮ ਇਹ ਮਾਏ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 258

Wandering is misgiving, the men are ruined.
Very dangerous and difficult to cross is this sea of mammon.

A good Naval Captain's first duty is to repair and plug the holes in the ships bottom. An inquisitive seeker, proceeding on a spiritual quest, must first endeavour to eliminate all kinds of nagging doubts, misconceptions and fears about the success of his spiritual voyage. A ship and the passengers, on board of its deck, are doomed to be drowned if its navigating captain is either incapable of locating the gaping holes or incapable of plugging those holes. In the same way, if a seeker of truth, keen to launch on a spiritual voyage, does not resolve his doubts and misconceptions, then these nagging doubts and misconceptions will become obstacles in his

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spiritual journey and such a wavering seeker will fall a prey to various kinds of misconceptions. He will never succeed in realizing truth and reach his spiritual destination :

ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਵਹੁ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਵਹੁ ਆਤਮੁ ਚੀਨਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 883

O brother, through the Guru's grace, still thy doubt, enshrine love for the Lord and understand thy ownself.

It is very necessary to rid of all doubts, fears and misgivings before going into meditation. Concentration and meditation on God's Name or *Naam Simran* is impossible without cleansing one's mind of all kinds of doubts.

We have tried to remove some of the doubts and misconceptions about *Naam Simran* from the minds of educated *Sikh* readers in this article.

First Misconception

Question : Why should man do *Naam Simran*? What is its utility? What is its usefulness?

Answer : We get a glimpse into the abstract, invisible yet experientially reliable eternal Divine power, the prime moving force of this universe,

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through the practice of *Naam Simran*. The knowledge about this Divine power and its realization resolves all human problems. It helps in resolving all material, social and spiritual concerns of man. It strengthens our faith in the existence of the Divine and makes His identity as visible and transparent as some other physical objects. *Naam Simran* clearly brings out all the Divine attributes recorded in scriptures and makes these clearly transparent to the devotee. It unfolds the mystery of death and rids the devotee of his fears about death. *Naam Simran* makes a devotee completely free from worries and makes him happy. It unites a devotee with the Divine and makes him an embodiment of all the Divine attributes. *Naam Simran* fulfils man's eternal desire to achieve perfect bliss and makes his spiritual quest a success. It makes a devotee completely sovereign.

Second Misconception :

Question : To repeat God's Name in the form of *Waheguru* or Ram again and again is nothing but an act of flattery or sycophancy. Since God or truth never appreciates flattery, it is useless to

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repeat His Name time and again, as He gets bored and sick of it. God will go mad if all the people of the world start shouting God's Name. To remember God and bother Him all the time is to offend Him. It is a wastage of one's own as well as God's time.

Answer : These questions imply that God's temperament is akin to man's own temperament. If God resembles man temperamentally, then these questions are valid. But the questioner must realize that God differs in His disposition from man. God, being formless, is beyond the dimensions of time, space and physical limitations. He is an impersonal and incorporeal entity :

ਕਾਮ ਨ ਕਰੋਧ ਨ ਲੋਭ ਨ ਮੋਹ
ਨ ਰੋਗ ਨ ਸੋਗ ਨ ਭੋਗ ਨ ਭੈ ਹੈ॥
ਦੇਹ ਬਹੀਨ ਸਨੇਹ ਸਭੋ ਤਨ
ਨਿਹ ਬਿਰਕਤ ਅਰੋਹ ਅਛੈ ਹੈ॥
Neither lust nor rage
Nor greed nor attachment
Neither disease nor grief
Nor indulgence nor fright
Afflicts the Divine Supreme.
ਚਕ੍ਰ ਚਿਹਨ ਅਰ ਬਰਨ ਜਾਤ ਅਰ ਪਾਤ ਨਹਿਨ ਜਿਹ॥

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ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਅਰ ਰੇਖ ਭੇਦ ਕੋਊ ਕਹਿ ਨ ਸਕਤ ਕਿਹ॥
ਅਚਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਨਭਵ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਅਮਿਤੋਜ ਕਹਿਜੈ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਇੰਦਰ ਇੰਦਰਾਣ ਸਾਹਿ ਸਾਹਾਣ ਗਣਿਜੈ॥

Without any physical dimension, race or caste,
Is the Divine Supreme.
Without any beauteous manifestation, identity or guise
Beyond anybody's reckoning is He.
Eternal entity, self-effulgent, power infinite.
God of the immumerable greatest gods, Sovereign
Supreme amongst sovereigns.
Is the Divine Supreme.

Since all kinds of energies and the laws governing these energies are born out of the Prime Energy i.e. the Divine *Wahiguru*, therefore, the Divine is the eternal, ever-existing supreme law or consciousness.

Naam-*Simran* does not mean shouting for the Divine. It is a spiritual flight of a human soul towards its prime source for a union with the Divine. It is a spiritual voyage. *Naam Simran* is a technique of making oneself introspective from being an extrovert and a therapy to exercise control over the diverse thought waves bombarding the human consciousness every

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moment of one's life. It is a technique to look into one's own consciousness through concentration of mind. How can such a process of streamlining one's self or channelsing one's energies disturb or offend the Divine. It is a desperate appeal of the human soul to the Divine to seek His grace for the streamlining and channelsing of one's disorganized or disoriented energies and focusing the channelised energy on the Divine.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib can never feel bored or offended even if the people of the whole world may bend and bow before Him because He is not a corporeal human entity. Reverence for Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* means making an earnest effort to follow and practise the teachings and message of truth stated in His body.

As a bird takes a flight with its wings into the vast endless sky and space, similarly a devotee progresses towards the Divine on the basis of *Naam Simran*. God is an abstract reality as stated in the following statement :

ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਸੂਖਮੁ ਅਗਮੁ ਹੈ ਕਿਤੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 756

The sire Lord is subtle and inaccessible. In what

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way can one meet Him?

Human soul cannot realize the Divine, unless it rids itself of its corporeal limitations and weaknesses and assume a spiritual disposition :

ਏਵਡੁ ਊਚਾ ਹੋਵੈ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਤਿਸੁ ਊਚੇ ਕਉ ਜਾਣੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 5

If any one be as great and high as He is, then alone he would know that Lofty Being.

The Divine is free from human ego. A human being must also shed his ego to have a glimpse of the Divine. Saint Kabir points to such a condition in the following hymn :

ਹਰਿ ਹੈ ਖਾਂਡੁ ਰੇਤੁ ਮਹਿ ਬਿਖਰੀ ਹਾਥੀ ਚੁਨੀ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਗੁਰਿ ਭਲੀ ਬੁਝਾਈ ਕੀਟੀ ਹੋਇ ਕੈ ਖਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 1377

God is like sugar, scattered in the sand. An elephant can not pick it up.
Says Kabir, the Guru has given me this sublime secret, "Become thou an ant and partake of it."

The imagery of elephant symbolizes a bloated ego, while a tiny ant stands for a humble egoless devotee or devoted human soul.

Third Misconception

Question : A person devoted to *Naam Simran*

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cannot remain capable of carrying on worldly pursuits. Only those persons should devotee themselves to *Naam Simran* who have fulfilled their family and worldly obligations. *Naam Simran* is not a pursuit to be carried on by people involved in worldly pursuits.

Answer : The whole *Sikh* history stands witness against this ideology. All the *Sikh* Gurus had raised their families. Meeting all the obligations of their family lives, they became practitioners and spiritual guides of *Naam Simran*. Guru Gobind Singh, even in the midst of fierce battles, practised meditation and exhorted his dedicated followers to meditate. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, being a temporal sovereign, used to get up at 3 A.M. in the early morning hours and listen to the recitation of *Gurbani*. As physical exercise makes human body strong, athletic, healthy and resistant to vagaries of weather, similarly *Naam Simran* is an exercise for the stimulation of human mind and soul. It makes human consciousness formidable, clean and immune against human temptations and weaknesses and capable of grasping higher truths.

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It is an acknowledged fact that a practitioner of *Naam Simran* starts enjoying great happiness and bliss in *Naam Simran* after some practice and starts devoting more time to this activity rather than wasting it on some irrelevant material pursuits. He develops a technique of the best time management and after performing his worldly duties saves maximum time for *Naam Simran*. He stops indulging in harmful and meaningless worldly pleasures. He devotes the best part of time to social service and *Naam Simran* after fulfilling his worldly obligations.

Fourth Misconception

Question : *Naam Simran* is a very strenuous and trying activity. Very few succeed in achieving success and perfection in this pursuit. Since it is not everybody's cup of tea, only persons with rare sensibilities and rarer dispositions should undertake this activity.

Answer : *Naam Simran* is, indeed, a very strenuous and formidable activity for those persons in its initial stages who have remained out of touch with the company of the devout and

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teachings of *Gurbani*. It is primarily because they have not been introspective and concentrated temperamentally in their daily life. Such persons feel scared and frustrated when they undertake *Naam Simran* and consider this activity as alien to their temperament. But it is not an insurmountable problem. It can be easily tackled. Awareness about the benefits and blessings of meditation produces the urge to practise meditation. The urge to meditate makes one undertake *Naam Simran*. After some efforts and practice, it becomes an effortless activity.

Although one achieves perfection in *Naam Simran* with great hard work and God's grace, but this should not discourage us from doing *Naam Simran*. A few individuals become billionaires after a life time of hard work and struggle, but all other human beings do not stop working hard for earning more wealth. It is very difficult to achieve success in every walk of life because a few selected people become expert doctors, engineers, accomplished singers and fine soldiers after a life time of hard work and struggle. But do all other human beings stop pursuing these careers because of the lower rate of success in

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these professions? Not at all. As average practitioners of medicine, art, engineering, earn their livelihood with the use of their professional skills, similarly an average practitioner of *Naam Simran* can also benefit from his meditational input. Knowledge and proficiency of any skill is a great asset, the more, the better. As a correct diagnosis of physical ailments leads to the treatment of the ills of the patients as well as the health of the medical practitioner himself, similarly an understanding of spiritual maladies of others as well as of one's own self, can benefit the lives of others as well as that of a spiritual therapist himself. Moreover, spiritual and psychic maladies are far more troublesome than physical ailments. *Naam Simran* relieves us from these psycho-spiritual ailments and fills our lives with happiness. Therefore, every human being must practise *Naam Simran*. It starts attracting everyone after a little practice because it is inherently built in the human system. By harmonizing with the eternal source of blissful ocean of elixir, through the medium of *Naam Simran*, every human being, of whatever temperamental disposition, can become enriched and saturated with bliss.

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ਖਤ੍ਰੀ ਬ੍ਰਹਮਣੁ ਸੂਦੁ ਬੈਸੁ ਉਧਰੈ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਚੰਡਾਲ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 300

The warriors, priests, menials, the farmers and parials are saved by remembering the Lord.

Naam Simran is not the monopoly of any particular religion, nation or race. Whosoever undertakes this spiritual therapy, gets united with *Waheguru* and attains bliss.

ਖਤ੍ਰੀ ਬ੍ਰਾਹਮਣ ਸੂਦ ਵੈਸ ਉਪਦੇਸੁ ਚਹੁ ਵਰਨਾ ਕਉ ਸਾਝਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 747

The four castes of warriors, priests, farmers and menials are equal partners in divine instruction.

Fifth Misconception

Question : It is sufficient to read scriptures, listen to *Gurbani* recitation, do social service and noble deeds to become worthy of God's grace and unite with Him. There is no need for undertaking *Naam Simran*.

Answer : Ninety five percent *GurSiklis* approximately, are leading their lives without *Naam Simran* these days under such a misconception. But these deeds such as reading *Gurbani*, listening to *Gurbani* recitation, sitting in

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the company of saints and spiritual people, can encourage a person to adopt a spiritual path and resolve some of his nagging doubts, but these practices can never lead to a union with the Divine. Nor can these practices bring about a spiritual enlightenment. One can never undertake a pilgrimage to a religious shrine by reading a railway time table or by listening to the accounts of pilgrimage from other pilgrims. At the most, these efforts can produce an urge to undertake a religious pilgrimage. But a religious pilgrimage can be accomplished by that person alone who leaves his home, travels in a train and reaches a place of pilgrimage and makes a worship there. Union with God occurs through the undertaking of an inner spiritual voyage. It can never be achieved merely by reading and listening to *Gurbani* or listening to the discourses of saints. It is mandatory to board a spiritual train and reach a Divine destination called *"Begumpura"* and enjoy its spiritual celestial splendour and bliss.

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਇਹੁ ਤਤੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 188
ਬਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਭਜਨ ਨਾਹੀ ਛੁਟਕਾਰਾ ॥
Says Nanak, the real thing I consider is this, that, without God's meditation, there is no

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deliverance.

Once one is able to locate the inner spiritual center of pilgrimage, there is no need to go on a physical pilgrimage to places of pilgrimage on this earth.

ਤੀਰਥਿ ਨਾਵਣ ਜਾਉ ਤੀਰਥੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਹੈ ॥
ਤੀਰਥੁ ਸਬਦ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਹੈ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 687***

Why should I go to bathe at the place of pilgrimage? God's Name is the real place of pilgrimage.
My pilgrim stations are the Name's meditation and the inner divine knowledge.

Infact, even good deeds also emanate from *Naam Simran*. A practitioner of *Naam Simran* accomplishes all the good deeds such as speaking truth; love of humanity; considering social service as service of God, making no discrimination between one's own child and that of one's neighbour; neither betraying anybody nor hurting anybody's feelings instinctively without making any fuss or publicity. As water flows naturally towards a lower plane, similarly a person devoted to *Naam Simran* is naturally and spontaneously virtuous and humble. It is because he observes the same Divine spirit pervading in

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all objects of the universe including his own self. He finds such a bond of affinity and unity that he looks at even his own adversaries and opponents with benevolence and empathy. He finds one and the same Divine spirit pervading the whole universe. He considers betrayal of others as an act of self-deception even as he considers service of humanity as service and welfare of his own self. There is a clear distinction between a virtuous person who has acquired virtuosity through the medium of reading books and a virtuous soul who has made virtuosity a part of his nature through his devotion to *Naam Simran*. While a spiritual devotee remains steadfast and stable during moments of crisis in his life because his knowledge is based on faith, a knowledge based virtuous person loses his balance during similar critical moments as his knowledge is bookish and acquired theoretically rather than experientially. A spiritually enlighted person behaves virtuously, spontaneously and unintentionally. As fragrance comes out naturally and spontaneously out of a blossoming flower, similarly noble and virtuous deeds emanate spontaneously from a spiritually realized soul. A

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person devoted to *Naam Simran* performs good deeds not because he is desirous of getting name and fame among the poor and the needy, but because he can not help doing otherwise. He becomes virtue or nobility incarnate. Good deeds and good conduct are natural fruit of a tree of *Naam Simran* which get manifested through the good conduct of spiritual devotees. *Naam Simran* is the key to the celestial house of Guru Nanak and *Waheguru*. Persons who do not meditate and practise *Naam Simran* but confine themselves to reading of *Gurbani* and doing some good deeds can never find entry into the house of the Divine but end up as mere ushers and doorkeepers of that celestial abode. High are *Gurbani* and its recitation, still higher is *Naam Simran*. The first two efforts are a state of preparation for *Naam Simran* but not the end product i.e. *Naam Simran*. God alone is the equivalent of *Naam Simran* whose Naam is to be meditated and dwelt upon.

Sixth Misconception

Question : The goal of *Naam Simran* is salvation or the end of birth-death cycle. But salvation in this sense, means nothingness or

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obliteration of one's identity. Since nobody wishes to lose his identity therefore, nobody should do meditation or *Naam Simran*.

Answer : When a child becomes an adult, his childhood ends but his identity remains intact. With attaining adulthood, his identity takes on a new and better or superior identity. Similarly, a spiritual devotee after completing his duration of *Naam Simran* takes on the image and identity of the Divine. He becomes immune to the fear of disease and death. He achieves a life of bliss and eternal poise which is described as a state of eternally stable sovereignty or *"Nihchal Raj"* in *Gurbani*. He realizes that he has woken up and emerged out of a nightmarish dream. Earlier, he has been visualizing himself as a beggar even though he was infact, the offspring of an Eternal Sovereign (God). Even though being an embodiment and integral part of the Divine, he had been visualizing himself as a captive of his circumstances and his physical and biological frame :

ਨਰਪਤਿ ਏਕੁ ਸਿੰਘਾਸਨਿ ਸੋਇਆ ਸੁਪਨੇ ਭਇਆ ਭਿਖਾਰੀ ॥
ਅਛਤ ਰਾਜ ਬਿਛੁਰਤ ਦੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੋ ਗਤਿ ਭਈ ਹਮਾਰੀ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 657

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It is like a king falling asleep on his throne and becoming a beggar in dream.
His kingdom is in tact, but separating from it, he suffers pain. Such, indeed, has been my condition.

But when a devotee awakes from his nightmarish dream state and comes out of the shell of his egoism, he feels extremely delighted at his spiritual realization and enlightenment. He bursts out into a melodious song of thanksgiving:

ਬਾਪੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਸਦ ਚਰੰਜੀਵੀ ॥
ਭਾਈ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਜੀਵੀ ॥
ਮੀਤ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਸਦਾ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ॥
ਕੁਟੰਬੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸੀ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਹਮ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਭਹਿ ਸੁਹੇਲੇ ॥
ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਪਿਤਾ ਸੰਗਿ ਮੇਲੇ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਮੰਦਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਚੇ ॥
ਦੇਸ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਅਪੂਛੇ ॥
ਰਾਜੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ॥
ਮਾਲੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਅਖੂਟੁ ਅਬੇਚਲੁ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਸੋਭਾ ਮੇਰੀ ਸਭ ਜੁਗ ਅੰਤਰਿ ॥
ਬਾਜ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਬਾਨ ਬਨੰਤਰਿ ॥
ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਭਗਤਿ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਸਭਨੀ ਲੋਈ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਮਾਝ ॥
ਪਿਤਾ ਪੂਤ ਰਲਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਾਂਝ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਉ ਪਿਤਾ ਪਤੀਨੇ ॥

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ਪਿਤਾ ਪੁਤ ਏਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਲੀਨੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1141

Ever ever-alive is my Father.
My brothers have become eternal as well.
Ever Imperishable are my friends. My family abides within its own 'Home'.
I have obtained peace, every one is then rendered peaceful.
The Perfect Guru has united me with my Father.
Pause.
The highest of all are my mansions.
My countries are unquestionably infinite.
Ever-stable is my Kingdom.
My wealth is inexhaustible and everlasting.
My glory rings through all the ages.
All the places and spaces are replete with my celebrity.
My praise resounds through all houses.
My love-worship is known amongst all the people.
My father has become manifest within my mind.
The father and the son have met together in partnership.
Says Nanak, when the Father is pleased with me, then the Father and the son are merged in the same love.

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Seventh Misconception

Question : One achieves success in *Naam Simran* after a life time of strenuous effort. It is extremely difficult to keep patience and hope for the possibility of success. As Ghalib has beautifully remarked :

Ah ko chahiyeye ek umar assar honey tak,
Kon jeeta hai teri zulf kay sir honey tak.

OR

It requires a life time for one's longing to be fulfilled,

Who waits and lives for the beloved's locks to touch one's face.

Answer : There are two rewards of *Naam Simran*. While devotee gets the first reward immediately when he undertakes this exercise, he gets the second reward after achieving perfection in *Naam Simran*. Whenever one meditates upon the Name of God with humility, devotion and faith, one's consciousness registers a response of affection and peace from the Divine. One starts feeling as one is advancing towards an affectionate, animate Divine entity who is

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responding lovingly to our devotion and love. In other words, God responds to love and devotion immediately. Whenever a devotee's consciousness gets focussed and gets into intimate communion with God during meditation or reading and listening to *Gurbani,* vibrations of peace and blissful tranquility start emanating from the eternal Divine *Waheguru,* engulfing the devotee's whole being, with peace, tranquility & bliss. One can undergo this experience of spiritual enrichment and enlightenment any moment by just remembering and meditating upon God's Name with faith, devotion and earnest intentions. The moment, a human being gets into communion with the Divine there will emerge an instant bond of love and affinity with the Divine. Bhai Gurdas has stated this phenomenon of instant bondage with God in the following words :

ਚਰਨ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਗੁਰੁ ਏਕ ਪੈਂਡਾ ਜਾਇ ਚਲ,
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਕੋਟ ਪੈਂਡਾ ਆਗੇ ਹੋਇ ਲੇਤ ਹੈ। ***(ਭਾਈ ਗੁਰਦਾਸ)***
Let a devotee undertake only one step towards God,
God undertakes thousands of steps to receive the devotee.

When one continues to pursue this path of *Naam Simran* for a considerable span of time, he

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gets into a permanent communion with the Divine who is the eternal source of peace, tranquility and blissfulness. After achieving this state, a devotee receives his second reward when God solves every kind of mystery and rewards a devotee with complete spiritual enlightenment. Every mystery about birth and death gets cleared and a devotee starts living in complete blissfulness. This spiritual reward of *Naam Simran* is beyond description in any kind of human language or mode of expression. All other pleasures, joys and feelings of worldly fame, power and self appear to be inferior to this supreme experience of spiritual enlightenment and enrichment. These two rewards of *Naam Simran*, one instant and the other final, can be likened to the twin returns of a regular monthly salary during service and a lump sum amount of gratuity, bonus and other retirement benefits such as provident fund on attaining the age of superannuation. With this second lump sum payment, a retired employee sustains himself in the post retirement life.

The Eighth Misconception

Question : *Naam Simran* is a myth; it is not

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verifiable scientifically.

Answer : As a scientific experiment gives correct results and derivative values when all the input ingredients are added in exact and correct ratio, similarly *Naam Simran* always results in acknowledgement of truth and perfect spiritual enlightenment when all conditonalities of *Naam Simran* such as earnest endeavour, humility, devotion and genuine efforts are fulfilled by a devotee. A devotee feels that he has appropriated a solid tangible achievement. In other words, *Simran* leads to certain definite, positive and substantial results. *Naam Simran*, thus, is a scientific process. Every human being can cross the barriers of human existence and enter the realm of the Divine through the practice of *Naam Simran*.

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Practising *Naam Simran* Along With Breathing And Eating

(ਸਾਸ ਗਿਰਾਸ ਨਾਮ ਜਪਨਾ)

It has been stated in the *Guru Granth Sahib* that a *Gursikh* should practise *Naam Simran* as spontaneously and as, continuously as one breaths and eats one's meals. Although very few *Gursikh*s dwell on God's Name with each and every breath of their lives, but it is quite comprehensible to understand this practice of *Naam Simran* along with one's breathing. As one continues to breathe, one needs to utter the first part "Wah" while inhaling and utter the latter part "Guru" while exhaling one's breath and keep one's mind/consciousness focused on God's Name. This is what is known as meditating along with breathing. But what do we mean by meditating by 'ਗਰਾਸ' or while eating? How to

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undertake this sort of meditation? Although one understands its total significance truly only when one actually practices this sort of 'ਸਾਸ ਗਰਾਸ" *Sˈnas Graass* meditation, but let us make an effort to convey its true import in linguistic terms for the benefit and guidance of spiritual devotees.

A human being goes on breathing till one ceases to breathe and dies physically. So one can make it a habit to synchronise meditation or *Simran* with breathing after practicing this technique for a span of one or two years. Reciting and repeating God's Name with one's tongue fatigues the tongue after sometime, but practicing meditation or *Naam Simran* with breathing for one or two years leads to a spontaneous effortless combination of meditation and breathing. This voluntary joint partmership between meditation and breathing becomes spontaneous and effortless without causing any stress on one's nerves.

When we eat food our upper and lower teeth strike against each other time and again with the movement of our jaw to chew the food particles. Combining the remembrance and repetition of God's Name with the movement of our jaw during eating food is called *Graass Simran*. Our

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consciousness, in normal course of eating food, gets engrossed with the taste of different dishes constituting our meals. We relish our food during eating and our consciousness declares the served food delicious or tasteless, on the basis of its taste as conveyed by our tongue.

Bani of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* states that, *Naam Simran* is as indispensable for human beings as other bodily functions such as eating food, drinking liquid, sleeping, waking up and movement of body. Therefore, human being must practise *Naam Simran*. This is what is meant by *Saas-Graass Simran*. So we must make it a habit to keep on doing *Naam Simran* while performing all these bodily functions.

ਊਠਤ ਬੈਠਤ ਸੋਵਤ ਜਾਗਤ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੁਝਹਿ ਚਿਤਾਰੈ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 820

Standing, sitting, sleeping and waking, this soul contemplates Thee, O Lord.

When one acquires this habit of doing *Simran* even during eating meals, then our eating habit also undergoes many changes. Since such a *GurSikh* remains engrossed in *Naam Simran* during eating, he starts eating his food a bit slowly. Majority of people do not chew their food

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properly. When one is hungry and the food served is also sumptuous, one tends to eat, rather gulp, the food quickly and swallow each morsel hastily. But a *GurSikh* who develops a habit of remaining engrossed in *Naam Simran* or the habit of *Saas Graas Simran,* he abandons his habit of gulping down his food quickly. Such a person eats his food slowly and slowly and chews it well. Each morsel of food in his mouth gets into a watery pulp as a result of proper chewing and goes down his throat almost in a liquid state.

One tastes food initially when one puts a morsel of food in one's mouth but a more fine taste of deliciousness emerges after the food gets chewed up so much that it turns into a watery pulp. Those who gulp down their food too quickly can never relish this unique taste. This taste or flavour emerges after the food in the mouth has been chewed extremely well. But majority of people lack the patience to chew their food so well that it turns into a watery pulp before going down their throats. But a person who has perfected the art of synchronizing his *Naam Simran* with the movement of his jaws during eating enjoys a unique satisfaction from

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his eating and this synchronization between meditating and eating becomes a spontaneous and unconscious act for him.

Majority of modern human afflictions result from man's habit of doing things hurriedly and hastily. Modern man does every thing fast and quickly. Therefore, many things and human actions remain incomplete due to haste. Sometimes, it becomes a human habit to do every thing in a hurry. Such a person, once addicted to do things hurriedly can never do things slowly even when he wished to go slow. *Sinran-Grinan Simran*, if practiced and perfected, changes one's eating habit as well. One starts eating one's food slowly and chewing it well and savouring his food better than others. A well-chewed food puts less stress on the digestive system and helps in better digestion of food. Improved digestion leads to better health of a practitioner of *Naam Simran*.

But all this discussion is only one aspect of this topic. Its other aspect is even more rewarding. Human sense of taste makes us slaves of this habit. With the continuous eating of very delicious meals, we become slaves of eating such foods to such an extent that we feel extremely

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disappointed if, perchance, we get a less expensive and less delicious food to eat. As we grow old, our digestive power gets weaker. Those who become slaves of eating tasty food, they become compulsive eaters of such food even in old age, which makes them victims of several kinds of diseases. On the contrary, a person who develops a habit of meditation and *Naam Simran,* even while eating, keeps on withdrawing from the taste of eating delicious foods even as he finds more joy in meditation.

Thus, the practice of simultaneous eating and meditating at its climax or perfection makes eating a secondary function or priority for a *GurSikh*. Such meditative people sometime forget about taking meals or forget what they had eaten earlier in the day or what was its taste. For such persons devoted to meditation, taste for spiritual joy or experience gets precedence over the taste for food items. Such devotees consume any kind of food that is served as naturally and as unconsciously as they breathe. But such a state of meditative perfection is arrived at after a lot of practice. Till a *GurSikh* achieves that stage, he experiences only random glimpses of spiritual joy

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during his simultaneous practice of eating and meditating. His sense of taste for food keeps on interfering with his taste for spiritual nourishment. But this practice enables him to enjoy his food. A soul or consciousness devoid of *Naam Simran* fails to enjoy even the best food as it remains engrossed in various kinds of mental worries. On the other hand, a practitioner of *Naam Simran* enjoys even the simplest and ordinary food which others fail to experience even while eating the most expensive and extraordinary food. Ultimately, a person devoted to *Naam Simran* gets completely free from the bondage of culinary tastes or tastes of the tongue :

ਜੋ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਏ ਮੇਰਾ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ
ਸੋ ਗੁਰਸਿਖੁ ਗੁਰੂ ਮਨਿ ਭਾਵੈ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 306***

The Guru's disciple, who with every breath and morsel contemplates over my Lord God, he becomes pleasing to Guru's mind.

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Those Who Meditate or Practice *Naam Simran* Are The Most Diligent And Industrious.

(ਜਿਨੀ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਇਆ ਗਏ ਮਸਕਤਿ ਘਾਲਿ)

Rigorous task means hard strenuous work or activity, a work involving lot of diligence and industry. What kind of rigorous or strenuous activity is involved in meditation or *Naam Simran?* Meditation involves hardly any physical stress; human body is at complete rest during meditation. What does Guru Nanak refer to as rigorousness during meditation in the concluding lines of his *Japuji.*

What kind of stress or rigorous hard work does human mind undergo during *Naam Simran.*

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Let us reflect over this phenomenon of rigorousness involved in meditation. A man's mind is already influenced or cast into diverse kinds of opinions about the world and its material activities before stepping into the realm of meditative world of spirituality. He has acquired these opinions from people of the world and their lifestyles through his daily interaction with other people. With the passage of time and human interactivity, he has been hardened into such opinions. He has been living his life and responding to situations based on these acquired opinions over a sizable span of his life. Now when he launches on a spiritual journey of meditation or *Naam Simran,* he starts hearing and responding to Guru's opinions instead of his earlier acquired human opinions. Since this new set of spiritual responses and opinions acquired from the Guru and *Gurbani* are completely at variance with the human opinions and material concerns, this latest set of spiritual responses and opinions appear to be quite strange and less tangible than the earlier set of human opinions to a newly initiated spiritual devotee. For example; he has learnt from his human relations and other people as well his education that a particular individual is his father,

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a particular region is his country and a particular building is his home. But, on the contrary, a spiritual guide or *Gurbani* of the Sikh Gurus tells him that no human being is his enemy in this world; that his relationship with his parents is transient which is likely to last for a short period only; that all his relations are fellow travelers in the journey of life like his own self; and that all these relations will depart for their respective destinations after spending a short span of time with him. No country is the monopoly of any one human being. All countries and regions belong to one and the same divine power, God, who has created this universe. The Guru also tells him that this visible universe is the abode of its Creator whose presence pervades everywhere all over this universe. When a new initiate or *Gursikh* finds these spiritual concepts and opinions as contradictory or at variance with his earlier worldly concerns and human opinions, he finds it very difficult to shed these earlier worldly and human concerns and acquire a new set of spiritual responses and mould his life along these spiritual responses. This is what is stressful and rigorous about this mode of meditative and spiritual life.

Gurbani makes a mention of a contract

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between the Guru (*Waheguru*) and his devotee of lifting a devotee from a human plane to a spiritual plane. But this paradigm shift from the human to the spiritual plane does not bring about any change in physical outlook of a devotee. What undergoes transformation is his mind and his mental responses or attitudes. Man's great assets are his mental responses, opinions and attitudes and his mode of life depends on his mental responses and attitudes. So when a *Gursikh* devotee launches on his spiritual voyage, he finds it very difficult to shed his egoistic personal responses, attitudes and beliefs, and adopt Guru's stated beliefs, directions, and guidelines.

Making this paradigm shift from the personal egoistic beliefs to the Guru-oriented way of life is not an easy task which could be accomplished in a span of few days. It is a life-long self-imposed, voluntary task. It should not be considered a bad bargain even if one succeeds in one's spiritual mission in one's whole lifetime. Therefore, a devout *Gursikh* devotee keeps on shedding his centries old, psychic responses and attitudes acquired over many of his earlier births and life forms and investing his consciousness with Guru's teachings and guidelines. This is the

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rigorous and strenuous input that one has to put in order to cross over to the spiritual plane from the physical and sensual plane. Bhai Gurdas states this phenomenon in the following words :

ਗੁਰਸਿੱਖੀ ਬਾਰੀਕ ਹੈ ਸਿਲ ਚੱਟਨ ਫਿੱਕੀ।
ਖੰਡਿਓਂ ਤਿੱਖੀ ਆਖੀਏ ਇਹ ਵਾਲੋਂ ਨਿੱਕੀ।

***"Gursikh** way of life is as strenuous as licking of a dry slab of a stone.*
It is as sharper to walk over as razor's edge or human hair."

This quotation points to the rigorousness and arduous nature of the spiritual voyage which a spiritual pilgrim has to undertake.

Now the next moot question arises why should one undertake such an arduous task? In other words, how is one rewarded or compensated for undertaking such a rigorous assignment? Let us seek an answer to this query from the *Bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. The *Bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* reveals that mental psychic, and spiritual responses and attitudes of a devotee start changing as he launches and progresses on a spiritual quest. Human nature and temperament of such a spiritual pilgrim starts acquiring some of the divine attributes. Finally, there comes a day

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or a stage during his spiritual journey, when he starts looking at life and its various events from a spiritual point of view. This spiritual point of view means the presence or Will of the Divine in the occurrence of every human event. When one starts recognizing the role or participation of Divine Will in the happening of every human or worldly event, then one's life becomes free from fear, worries, tension, apprehensions of insult, humiliation or shamefulness. In other words, the life of a spiritually-enlightened or streamlined devotee becomes a life of bliss and complete happiness. At the final stage of this spiritual voyage, a devotee becomes inseparable from the Divine and becomes an image of the Divine. Infact, his present and future becomes blessed and free from all shackles and bonds. He becomes so magnanimous and generous that his spiritual capital goes on increasing as he shares it with others. The more others draw from his well of spirituality, the more prosperous and fulfilled he becomes. These spiritually endowed and enriched persons benefit several others by leading them on a similar spiritual voyage. It is about these *Gursikhs*, that *Gurbani* states :

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ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇ ਮੁਖ ਉਜਲੇ ਕੇਤੀ ਛੁਟੀ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 8

O' Nanak! their faces shall be bright and many shall be emancipated along with them.

ਗੁਰਸਿਖਾ ਕੀ ਭੁਖ ਸਭ ਗਈ ਤਿਨ ਪਿਛੈ ਹੋਰ ਖਾਇ ਘਨੇਰੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 451

Goes all the appetite of the sikhs of the Guru. Rather, other feed themselves in their wake.

So one should never shirk from a task which makes a man as powerful, fearless and eternally blissful as God Himself. In fact, such a task should not be considered a rigorous work at all, but a Divine Grace which lifts a human being from a human plane to a Divine level. Bravest of the brave have been undertaking such a journey or spiritual voyage in the past and will continue to do so in future as well and sacrificing their worldly and human pleasures for the sake of acquiring a superior, everlasting life of bliss and happiness.

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Can God (*Waheguru*) Be Seen?

(ਕੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਦਿਸ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ?)

Truth, for an ordinary mortal, can not be objective. His subjective weakness always blurs his vision. Hegal's great contribution to human thought was the discovery of historical relativism. Human mind, he found, could climb out of its environments and view objectively from an absolute stand point. But in India from times immemorial, the masters have laid down that by ceaseless efforts of assiduous detachment to worldly things, the mind can become detached, fearless and untainted by wrath; It can then transcend direct and inferential knowledge. Fancy, even memory and with vision undimmed, can see the truth as it is, which is entirely different from what seems to us and what we call truth.

These lines are taken from K. H. Munshi's

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book "Follow the Mahatma". These lines mean that a human being can never see Truth (God) as It/He is because when he tries to see truth objectively, some of his own subjectivity enters into it and colours or dilutes his objectivity which hinders his capacity to see truth (God) as He actually is. But on the other hand, there have been some sages, saints, thinkers and Gurus since the ancient times to modern times who believe that human beings are capable of elevating their mental status to such a level from which they can visualize truth as It actually is without being affected by their personal, subjective opinions, beliefs and attitudes. Observed from that level, the Truth (God) is entirely different from what It appears to be to the ordinary human beings in their ordinary subjective experience.

Let us try to look at this possibility of seeing God or truth from the point of view of *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib*. When a person loses one of his two eyes due to some reason, then his other healthy eye becomes more activated and powerful. If, for some reason, both of his eyes are rendered useless, then his power of concentration becomes stronger than what it was earlier. It is

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often said that blind people have a stronger vision. Similarly, if a person's one hand is amputated for some reason, then he starts performing his bodily functions with one hand only which he used to perform earlier with both of his hands. It is our common observation that any bodily organ which we utilize more becomes more active than others. For example, athletes have more flexible and agile legs; body-builders, using dumbles, have stronger muscles; singers have stronger voice organs, musicians have more active fingers; blacksmiths have stronger hands; hunters have sharper eyes. It means human beings can increase the efficiency of their bodily organs and develop their strength with continuous exercise and practice.

When a human being succeeds in having control over all his bodily organs and senses with meditation and *Naam Simran* or concentration on God's Name, a new faculty gets activated in his body. This newly activated faculty is called 'experiential eye" in the meditational terminology. *Bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* refers to this faculty in the following words :

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ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖੜੀਆਂ ਬਿਅੰਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸੰਦੋ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 577

Nanak, different are those eyes, with which my Spouse is beheld.

ਗੁਰਹਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਓ ਲੋਇਨਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 407

The Guru has shown Thee to mine eyes, O Lord.

When human being's meditational exercise reaches its climax, he is capable of controlling all his bodily senses and activates his "experiential eye" and begins an exercise of "self-examination and introspection". When he continues with this exercise for sometime, he starts observing that he has reached his present state of human evolution after passing through several lives of others species. A Persian poet Urfi has described this evolutionary state in the following words :

ਜ਼ਿ ਖ਼ੁਦ ਗਰ ਦੀਦਾ ਬਰ ਬੰਦੀ
ਚਿ ਗੋਇਮ ਕਾਮੇਂ ਜਾਂ ਬੀਨੀਂ
ਚੁਨਾਂ ਕਜ਼ ਇਸ਼ਤਿਆਕੇ
ਦੀਦਨਸ਼ ਜ਼ਾਦੀ ਹੁਮਾਂ ਬੀਨੀਂ

Bhai Nand Lal, a celebrated Persian poet in Guru Gobind Singh's service has also written :

ਨਦਾਨਿਸਤੇਮ ਅਜ਼ ਰੋਜ਼ੇ
ਅਜ਼ਲ ਈਂ ਨਕਸ਼ੇ ਆਦਮ ਰਾ।
ਕਿ ਨੱਕਾਸ਼ ਅਜ਼ ਬਰਾਏ ਬੁਦਨੇ

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ਖੁਦ ਖਾਨਾ ਮੇ ਸਾਜ਼ਦ।

It means when a *devotee,* after a considerable amount of meditation or *Naam Simran* starts experiencing the activation of his "experiential eye" and finds this spiritual state quite durable and stable, he acquires the power of seeing or experiencing God in his soul even when his physical eyes remain open and exposed to worldly objects. It must also be understood that we do not observe things as much with our physical eyes as we observe with our consciousness. Sometime, we do not even hear the ticking sound of a wall clock in our room when our mind is occupied somewhere else. Similarly, we look at the wall pictures in our rooms only when our mind is focused on these. Sometime, we cross our well-known friends on our way unless our mind takes a note of their presence. Sometime, we do not listen to somebody else's shouts when we are absorbed in our own thoughts. Children, often, do not listen to anybody's shouts when they are engrossed in their play. All these instances prove that our bodily faculties do not register any response until our mind or consciousness directs these senses to

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take notice of things. This proves that our eyes do not see objects, but objects are seen by our eyes when they are commanded to see things. Similarly, our ears do not listen to any kind of sounds but sounds are listened to by ears when ears are commanded to listen. Our tongue does not speak any words, but words are spoken by the tongue under the command of our mental faculty. When a devout *Gursikh* takes a complete command over his faculties through *Naam Simran* or meditation, then he acquires a capability which enables him to concentrate and communicate with his soul even when his physical faculties are awake and functional. At such a stage, he does not take notice of the outside world even when his eyes are open. It is such a stage of communication with the Divine that his audio-visual faculties, even in their awakened state cannot obstruct this communication. Audial and visual communication with external objects does not start till the communication with the inner spiritual source stops. Communication with the external objects stars only when consciousness joins the physical faculties and activates them.

At a still higher level of *Naam Simran* or

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meditation, a spiritual devotees starts observing or seeing the presence of the same Divine entity at the bottom of all external objects as he has been observing in his own consciousness or soul. Such a spiritually awakened devotee finds no difference between himself and other human beings. He observes the presence of the same single Divine presence in all human beings as transparently as he finds it in his own self. As we feel delighted when we find multi-coloured fish moving playfully in a transparently clear water of a lake, a spiritually enlightened person feels extremely ecstatic when he finds all living species and other objects such as the sun and stars moving and functioning in a single large universe created by a single Divine source. At this stage, opening and closing of physical eyes makes no difference because in both the states, his observation takes note of only one and the same entity behind visual perception. But it must be made absolutely clear here that in order to arrive at this state of spiritual enlightenment of communicating with the Divine even with open eyes, it is absolutely obligatory to start meditating with closed eyes and control and still one's other

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physical faculties by focusing one's attention on *Naam Simran* and keep on practicing this meditative exercise till one starts observing the presence of the Divine in one's inner consciousness or soul. It is impossible to observe and communicate with the Divine without prayer, meditation or *Naam Simran*, humility and devotion. The state of simultaneously communicating with the Divine with one's physical senses open and functioning cannot be arrived at without internal streamlining and fine tuning of one's consciousness. It is foolish to think of any short cut strategy. Internal psychic and spiritual synchronization with the Divine leads to a simultaneously dual internal and external communication. When a devotee is able to see God and communicate with him both in his consciousness as well as through the objects of His creation, this phenomenon is described by Guru Teg Bahadur in the following hymn of *Gurbani* :

ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਬਨ ਖੋਜਨ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਸਰਬ ਨਿਵਾਸੀ ਸਦਾ ਅਲੇਪਾ ਤੋਹੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਸਮਾਈ ॥
ਪੁਹਪ ਮਧਿ ਜਿਉ ਬਾਸੁ ਬਸਤੁ ਹੈ ਮੁਕਰ ਮਾਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਛਾਈ ॥
ਤੈਸੇ ਹੀ ਹਰਿ ਬਸੇ ਨਿਰੰਤਰਿ ਘਟ ਹੀ ਖੋਜਹੁ ਭਾਈ ॥

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ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੀਤਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬਤਾਈ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਨੁ ਆਪਾ ਚੀਨੈ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਾਈ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 684

Why goest thou, O man, to search God in the forest?
God, though ever detached, dwells everywhere and abides even with thee.
As fragrance abides in the flower and as reflection in the mirror, so does God dwell within thee and search thou Him within thy heart, O brother.
Within and without, know that there is but One Lord. This is the understanding the Guru has imparted unto me.
Without knowing one's self, O slave Nanak, the moss (filth) of doubt is removed not.

A still more higher stage of communication is difficult to describe and difficult for an ordinary human being to understand but, nevertheless, it is a fact. At this highest stage of spiritual realization or enlightenment, a devotee finds God pervading in every animate and inanimate thing around him. The whole visible creation consisting of all kinds of species, planets, stars, the Sun, the Moon, each and every object

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seem to be but a reflection of the Divine. The various shapes and sizes of these objects seem to be the images of the Divine soul that a devotee sees in his own soul and they seem to be flashing along in one's mind as if in a dream. All these entities seem to be permeated and saturated with the Divine. In fact, the Divine becomes more manifest than the universe or seems to replace the universe. Our ancient sages, Guru's, prophets and saints have experienced this kind of mystical experience, the whole universe drowned in divinity. Any spiritual devotee, in today's world as well, can aspire to have the same experience.

Sri Guru Nanak's eyes never looked at *Sajjan Thug* as a burglar. He saw presence of God even in *Sajjan Thug*. It is for this reason that one look of Guru Nanak on his face removed the life-long evil born out of ignorance from his heart and converted him into a person with a virtuous disposition which infact was his natural state of mind since he also was an image of the same Divine. For a person existing at this level of spiritual realization, all distinctions of being a saint and a burglar; a friend or a foe, a snake or a lion, one's kin or a stranger, blur and

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disappear. For him, nothing else than God, the one prime source and creator of this whole universe, matters. The whole creation seems to be his reflection and image. This is the outlook of a person steeped in *Naam Simran*. Sooner or later, the inner experiential eye of a *Naam Simran* devotee must realize this kind of pantheistic reality about the creation. As this spiritual quest keeps on becoming faster and more keen, his pantheistic realization about God's eternal permeation in His creation goes on being crystallized. The only technique for this kind of spiritual realization and activating the "experiential eye" for millenniums has been the technique of *Naam Simran*.

An other invisible identity or image of *Waheguru* is also there which is different from the Divine identity conceived and visualized by man. This invisible identity becomes visible to the spiritual devotees or *Gurmukhs* after their man-made conceptions, perceptions and visualizations about God are deleted and brushed aside by their practice of *Naam Simran* and after they start seeing God as He actually is through *Naam Simran*. When they see this all-pervasive visible identity and

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image of God, they can not keep this knowledge secret from the world. It is because their own sense of justice and integrity compels them to share this rare, blissful experience of the Divine with the suffering, wavering and strife-torn humanity. *Bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* refers to this kind of human dillemma :

ਕਾਂਇ ਰੇ ਬਕਬਾਦੁ ਲਾਇਓ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇਓ ਤਿਨਹਿ ਛਪਾਇਓ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 718*

O man, why talkest thou nonsense?
He, who finds the Lord, conceals he this fact.

It is the highest stage of spiritual enlightenment which one realizes after a most rigorous practice of *Naam Simran*. Initially, a spiritually enlightened person does not share this hard-earned experience with others. But as this state of spiritual enrichment becomes richer and richer, he feels generous and willing to share it with others. He also realizes that although whatever spiritual enlightenment he has achieved is his monopoly, but his spiritual treasure would increase not by hoarding it but by distributing it and sharing it with others. This realization would rid him of his initial reservation of sharing it with others. Now, instead of keeping it a secret, he

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makes a declaration that he has received spiritual enlightenment and extends an open invitation to the suffering humanity to come and share this spiritual elixir of life with him. He feels as if he has been reborn and wishes to administer this elixir of *Naam Simran* and its beneficial effects to the ignorant people. He has had a glimpse of the True Divine and would lead others to know how to have a similar glimpse . He derives extreme pleasure when he shares his knowledge magnanimously and generously with those people who think they are spiritually bankrupt and paupers. As an affectionate mother feels delighted by feeding a famished child, similarly he feels immensely fulfilled by sharing his blissful spiritual experience with the spiritually deprived. He gets as spontaneous a joy in sharing as a flower feels in spreading its fragrance. He does not keep his spiritual experience as a scholarly achievement by keeping it confined to a scholarly publication in a book form as his exclusive patent but making its applications widely available free of cost to as many people as possible without any let or hindrance. The following collection of hymns from *Gurbani* state this stance of his

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generosity and magnanimity.

ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹਭਾ ਨੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਾ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 61

The Lord is beyond the Vedas and the four religious books of the Muslim, Christian and Jews. Nanak's King is seen manifest, everywhere.

ਅਨਦੋ ਅਨਦੁ ਘਣਾ ਮੈ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਡੀਠਾ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਚਾਖਿਅੜਾ ਚਾਖਿਅੜਾ ਮੈ ਹਰਿ ਰਸੁ ਮੀਠਾ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 452

Joy! great joy! He, the Lord Master, I have seen. Tasted, tasted have I the sweet elixir of the Lord God.

ਖੁਦੀ ਮਿਟੀ ਤਬ ਸੁਖ ਭਏ ਮਨ ਤਨ ਭਏ ਅਰੋਗ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟੀ ਆਇਆ ਉਸਤਤਿ ਕਰਨੈ ਜੋਗੁ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 260

When self-conceit is erased, then does peace ensue and the mind and body are healed. Nanak, then it is that He, who is worthy of praise, is beheld.

ਮੈ ਪੇਖਿਓ ਰੀ ਊਚਾ ਮੋਹਨੁ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਚਾ ॥
ਆਨ ਨ ਸਮਸਰਿ ਕੋਊ ਲਾਗੈ ਢੂਢਿ ਰਹੇ ਹਮ ਮੂਚਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 534

O I have seen the Lord to be high. The Bewitching Master is the highest of all.

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No one else is equal to Him and I have made a great search.

ਉਸਤਤਿ ਕਹਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਮੁਖਹੁ ਤੁਹਾਰੀਆ ॥
ਮੋਹੀ ਦੇਖਿ ਦਰਸੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 261

Thine praise, O Lord, I cannot describe with my mouth.
Nanak is fascinated on beholding Thy sight and is devoted unto Thee.

ਜਹ ਜਹ ਪੇਖਉ ਤਹ ਨਾਰਾਇਣ ਸਗਲ ਘਟਾ ਮਹਿ ਤਾਗਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 682

Wherever I see, there is the Pervading Lord, the string, in which all the hearts are strung.

ਠਾਕੁਰ ਤੁਮ੍ ਸਰਣਾਈ ਆਇਆ ॥
ਉਤਰਿ ਗਇਓ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੰਸਾ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1218

O Lord, I have sought Thy refuge.
The anxiety of my mind has departed, since I obtained Thine vision.

ਭਰਿ ਭਰਿ ਮਰਤੇ ਜਬ ਜਾਨੀਐ ਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਭਰੁ ਚੂਕਾ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 186

I was engulfed in mortifying dread and terror, when I deemed the Lord afar.
By seeing Him fully pervading everywhere, my fear is removed.

ਗੁਰਹਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਓ ਲੋਇਨਾ ॥

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ਈਤਹਿ ਊਤਹਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਤੂੰਹੀ ਤੂੰਹੀ ਮੋਹਿਨਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 407

The Guru has shown Thee to mine eyes, O Lord.
Here and there, in every soul and in every body,
Thou, thou alone art contained, O Bewitcher.

ਹੈ ਤਉ ਸਹੀ ਲਖੈ ਜਉ ਕੋਈ ॥
ਤਬ ਓਹੀ ਉਹੁ ਏਹੁ ਨ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 342

For sure, the Lord exists, only if some one could understand Him.
In that case, He alone will seem, and not this man.

ਕਰਿ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਸੁਆਮੀ
ਨੇਤ੍ਰ ਦੇਖਹਿ ਦਰਸੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਲਾਖ ਜਿਹਵਾ ਦੇਹੁ ਮੇਰੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ
ਮੁਖੁ ਹਰਿ ਆਰਾਧੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 780

O my Loved Lord, have mercy on me, that with my eyes, I may see Thy vision.
My Beloved, bless Thou me with lacs of tongues, with which my mouth may utter Thy Name.

ਹਉ ਬਿਸਮੁ ਭਈ ਜੀ ਹਰਿ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਅਪਾਰਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 784

Wonder struck am I beholding the peerless vision of God.

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ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪੇਖਤ ਜੀਵਾ ਠੰਢੀ ਥੀਵਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 784

Seeing the Lord I sustain life and am pacified.
None else is as great as He.

ਬਿਨਉ ਕਰੀ ਜੇ ਜਾਣਾ ਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਰਹਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ ॥
ਜਨੁ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਗਾਵੈ ਦੇਖਿ ਹਦੂਰਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 737

I may pray to my Lord, if I deem Him far.
The Imperishable Lord is fully pervading everywhere.
Seeing the Lord just present, slave Nanak sings His praise.

ਆਵਹੁ ਸਜਣਾ ਹਉ ਦੇਖਾ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 764

Come, O Friend, so that I may behold Thy vision.

ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭਈ ਨਿਹਕੇਵਲ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਖੁ ਨਾਸਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 764

Seeing Thy sight I have become desireless and my pain of birth and death is ended.

ਅਦਿਸਟੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ॥
ਅੰਗ - 87

Through the Guru, he beholds with his eyes the unseen, unapproachable, unknowable and immaculate Lord.

ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰੁ ਗੋਵਿਦੁ ਜਿਸੁ ਤੁਠਾ ॥

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ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਰਮਈਆ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਡੀਠਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 888

Nanak, he on whom the Guru-God is merciful; he sees the Lord contained amongst all the hearts.

ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਸੁਣਿ ਸਾਚੀ ਸਾਖੀ ॥
ਸੋ ਬੋਲਹਿ ਜੋ ਪੇਖਹਿ ਆਖੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 894

Hear thou the true tale of the saints.
They say only that what they see with their eyes.

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God's Nature

(ਰੱਬ ਦਾ ਸੁਭਾਅ)

Waheguru is an all-pervasive power, a supreme power. All other kinds of energy emanate from this Supreme Divine Power. The whole universe exists and revolves around this supreme Divine power. The whole universe exists and revolves at the will of this power. All objects - the sun, the moon, the sky, the earth, winds, the ocean, the mountains, human beings, animal kingdom, vegetation and all other visible things exist and manifest at the will of this Supreme Divine power. The entire management and administration of the universe runs with the express will of the Divine. Not a single leaf of a tree moves without His Will :

It is human nature that man is scared of an object about which he is ignorant. The moment he

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understands it, he does not feel scared of it. A person, who does not know how to swim, feels scared of water. The moment he understands the nature of water, he starts diving and jumping into the water fearlessly. Similarly, so long as man regards God as someone different from him, he remains ignorant of his relationship with God and continues to feel scared of Him. He would continue to remain scared till he is ignorant about His temperament. But the moment man understands the relationship between God and himself, he will not be scared of Him :

ਡਰਿ ਡਰਿ ਮਰਤੇ ਜਬ ਜਾਨੀਐ ਦੂਰਿ ॥
ਡਰੁ ਚੂਕਾ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਭਰਪੂਰਿ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 186*

I was engulfed in mortifying dread and terror,
when I deemed the Lord afar.
By seeing Him fully pervading every where, my fear is removed.

ਭੈ ਮਹਿ ਰਚਿਓ ਸਭੁ ਸੰਸਾਰਾ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਭਉ ਨਾਹੀ ਜਿਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 192*

In fear the whole world is engrossed.
He, who has the Name for his support, has no fear.

Man's research about the Divine has revealed that the Creator is not only omnipotent but also

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omnipresent and omniscient. There is no such place or space where His presence is not existent:

ਜਲਿ ਥਲਿ ਮਹੀਅਲਿ ਪੂਰਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਹਰਿ ਭਣਿਆ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 319

God is said to be fully filling the ocean, dry land, sky and every heart.

ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭੀਤ਼ਰਿ ਏਕੋ ਜਾਨਹੁ ਇਹੁ ਗੁਰ ਗਿਆਨੁ ਬਤਾਈ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 684

Within and without, know that there is but One Lora. This is the understanding the Guru has imparted unto me.

There is not any secret which is unknown to Him. Our human body continues to function normally when we go to sleep. Our heart continues to beat as well. Our liver continues to digest food. Body metabolism also continues to convert food into life-giving blood. Our kidneys continue to clean our blood. The entity living inside the body, call it mind, soul or consciousness, also continues to remain occupied in some kind of activity. It keeps on building and destroying different types of worlds in a dream state. Thus, the whole play of human life continues. It is an accepted and acknowledged spiritual fact since beginning of this universe that

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the Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Omniscient Supreme Divine power sustains and preserves His self-created universe and its human, animal and vegetative species each and every moment of time. Man continues to waver and remain scared of God till his flickering mind does not repose his faith in the creative power of the Divine. But the moment he comes to repose his faith in His Omnipresence and Omnipotence, he becomes tension free and fearless on the basis of his faith:

ਊਠਤ ਸੁਖੀਆ ਬੈਠਤ ਸੁਖੀਆ ॥
ਭਉ ਨਹੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਜਾਂ ਐਸੇ ਬੁਝੀਆ ॥
ਰਾਖਾ ਏਕੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਸੁਆਮੀ ॥
ਸਗਲ ਘਟਾ ਕਾ ਅੰਤਰਜਾਮੀ ॥
ਸੋਇ ਅਚਿੰਤਾ ਜਾਗਿ ਅਚਿੰਤਾ ॥
ਜਹ ਕਹਾਂ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਤੂੰ ਵਰਤੰਤਾ ॥
ਘਰਿ ਸੁਖਿ ਵਸਿਆ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਿ ਮੰਤ੍ਰੁ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1136

I am in peace when rising, in peace when sitting and feel no fear, when I know this wise, that : The One Lord, who is the searcher of all hearts, is my Protector. Pause.
Care-free I sleep and unanxiously awake I.
Thou, O Lord, art contained everywhere.
Says Nanak, since the Guru has fixed the Holy Word within my mind, I live in peace within

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& without, at home and find peace abroad.

When we look at other species of animals, birds and water-borne creatures like fish and whales, we notice a phenomenon which is just contradictory to our own human experience. It is our experience that, despite our best efforts to earn our livelihood day and night, we do not earn as much as we wish to earn :

ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਬਿਰਲੇ ਹੀ ਕੀ ਬੁਝੀ ਹੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 213*

The thirst (desire) of only a few is quenched (stilled).

But the Divine power continuously provides sustenance to all the birds, animals and insects except man without any deliberate efforts. These creatures do not suffer from any tension, suffering or ambitions and they lead a tension free healthy happy life. This phenomenon makes a sensible person to reflect and ponder over this mystery. He starts thinking if man's desperate effort rather desperate struggle for earning his livelihood is not the direct consequence or rather a punishment for his lack of faith in the sustaining and preserving power of the Divine? In this context Marie corrollie remarks :

"I saw how humanity, moved by gross

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egoism, has in every age of the world, ordained laws and morals for every age of the world, has ordained laws and morals for itself which are the very reverse of nature's teachings - I saw how, instead of helping the wheel of progress and wisdom onwards man reverses it by his obstinacy and turns it backward even on the very point of the great attainment, and I was able to perceive how the sorrows and despairs of the world are caused by this one simple fact that man works against Nature while Nature, ever divine and invincible, pursues her God-appointed course sweeping her puny opponents aside and inflexibly carrying out her will to the end. And I learned how true is that if man went with Her instead of against Her, then there would be no misunderstanding of the laws of the universe and where there is now nothing but discord, all would be divine harmony."

That mother's breasts get filled with milk even before the birth of a child is a sufficient proof of God being the sustainer and the preserver of His creation. After such a sound evidence, a sensible person regards man's dissatisfaction even after his desperate struggle for

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his livelihood as a result of man's own ignorance, carelessness, and foolish kind of cleverness. Such a view about man's foolish assumptions is reinforced by the march of human civilization. As means of production have increased due to man's intelligence and shrewd efforts, so have increased man's mental tensions and other problems like unemployment. As various kinds of methods of medical treatment and number of doctors have increased, so have increased number of diseases and patients. As science and technology have advanced, so have increased human ambitions, greed, disharmony, rivalry, envy, hatred, instability, weapons of war and mass destruction and fear of one's neighbours. Nature treats everyone alike. A live electric wire gives shock to everyone whosoever touches it. Man tries to be more intelligent than God or tries to outwit Him. As a result he fails, suffers and goes astray. *Waheguru* never wishes its own created progeny to starve. Otherwise what is the sense behind creating this whole creation if His own created beings have to struggle desperately for feeding themselves. Air and water, which are indispensable to sustain life, are available freely

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and in plenty. The earth has been created on such an enormous scale that it can grow food and sustain a human population even if it increases fifty times more than its present strength. Human greed, shortage of means, problems and suffering are creations of man himself. Human creation of deadly war weapons is the result of man's own imaginary and negative thinking. Those who know the perfect design of God and Nature have an unwavering and steady faith in His benevolence. They do not have a sense of insecurity and live their lives in bliss and happiness :

ਕਾਹੇ ਰੇ ਮਨ ਚਿਤਵਹਿ ਉਦਮੁ
ਜਾ ਆਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਪਰਿਆ ॥
ਸੈਲ ਪਥਰ ਮਹਿ ਜੰਤ ਉਪਾਏ
ਤਾ ਕਾ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਆਗੈ ਕਰਿ ਧਰਿਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 10*

Why dost thou, O' mind! think of enterprises,
when Revered God Himself is engaged in thy care?
In the rocks and stones He has created beings.
Their sustenance He puts before them.

ਮੇਰੇ ਮਾਧਉ ਜੀ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਸੁ ਤਰਿਆ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦਿ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਸੂਕੇ ਕਾਸਟ ਹਰਿਆ ॥
ਜਨਨਿ ਪਿਤਾ ਲੋਕ ਸੁਤ ਬਨਿਤਾ ਕੋਇ ਨ ਕਿਸ ਕੀ ਧਰਿਆ ॥
ਸਿਰਿ ਸਿਰਿ ਰਿਜਕੁ ਸੰਬਾਹੇ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਕਾਹੇ ਮਨ ਭਉ ਕਰਿਆ ॥

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ਊਡੇ ਊਡਿ ਆਵੈ ਸੈ ਕੋਸਾ ਤਿਸੁ ਪਾਛੈ ਬਚਰੇ ਛਰਿਆ ॥
ਤਿਨ ਕਵਣੁ ਖਲਾਵੈ ਕਵਣੁ ਚੁਗਾਵੈ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਸਿਮਰਨੁ ਕਰਿਆ॥
ਅੰਗ - 10

O' my Venerable Lord of mammon! He, who mixes with the society of saints, is saved.
By the grace of the Guru, (he) obtains the supreme state (as) the dry wood blooms forth. Pause.
Of mother, father, people, son, (and) wife no one is the support of another.
To every individual the Lord reaches sustenance, why fearest (thou), O' my soul?
The flamingoes come having flown over hundreds of miles, their youngling they leave behind.
Who feeds them and who causes them to peck? (Hast thou ever) thought of it in thy mind?

ਤੂ ਕਾਹੇ ਡੋਲਹਿ ਪ੍ਰਾਣੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਰਾਖੈਗਾ ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਪੈਦਾਇਸਿ ਤੂ ਕੀਆ ਸੋਈ ਦੇਇ ਆਧਾਰੁ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਉਪਾਈ ਮੇਦਨੀ ਸੋਈ ਕਰਦਾ ਸਾਰ ॥
ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਮਾਲਕੁ ਦਿਲਾ ਕਾ ਸਚਾ ਪਰਵਦਗਾਰੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 724

Why waverest thou, O mortal.
The Creator Himself shall protect Thee.
He, who gave thee birth, will also provide thee with sustenance.
He, who has created the world, takes care of it.

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The True Cherisher is the Lord of all the hearts and minds.

From Bible :

Therefore I tell you
Never trouble about what you are to eat or drink.
Nor about what ye are to put on your body.
Surely life means more than food.
Look at the wild birds.
They sow not, they reap not, they gather nothing in granaries.
And yet your heavenly Father feeds them.
Are you not worth more than birds?
And why should you trouble about clothing?
Look how the lilies of the fields grow?
They neither toil nor strain.
And yet I tell you.
Even Solomen in all grandeur.
Was never robed like one of them.

Jesus Christ.

As soon as a *Gurmukh* comes to acquire a faith that *Waheguru* is Omnipotent, Omnipresent, Sustainer and Preserver of everyone and everything, all his self-created fears, worries, tensions and anxiety disappear. His consciousness

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feels as light and fresh as a flower which has shed all its thorns. Setting aside all these concerns and tensions about earning one's livelihood as the sole concern of human life, he starts thinking about the other higher concerns of life. Now his priority shifts towards those interests, thoughts and reflective ideas which are oriented towards the Divine and His blissful disposition instead of those concerns which give priority to material things. All the scriptures, including Sri *Guru Granth Sahib,* offer the same answer to his philosophical concerns. Primarily, these exhortations emphasize that human beings should do noble deeds, prayer, welfare of others and self-introspection.

ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥
ਅਵਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਿਤੈ ਨ ਕਾਮ ॥
ਮਿਲੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਭਜੁ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ ॥
ਸਰੰਜਾਮਿ ਲਾਗੁ ਭਵਜਲ ਤਰਨ ਕੈ ॥
ਜਨਮੁ ਬ੍ਰਿਥਾ ਜਾਤ ਰੰਗਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 12*

This human body has come to they hand.
This is thy chance to meet the Lord of the world.
Other works are of no avail to thee.
Joining the society of saints, contemplate over

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the Name alone.
Make effort for crossing the dreadful world-ocean.
In the love of worldliness, the human life is passing in vain.

At this stage of spiritual quest, a *Gurmukh* is keen to understand the true nature and identity of this Divine Force which sustains this universe and which is Omnipresent and Omniscient. Is this Power as deaf, dumb and non-communicative as any other kind of energy? Is there any difference between Divine Energy and the electric energy or both of these energies are equally insensitive, senseless, uninterested, deaf, dumb and incommunicative? A deep contemplation will reveal that the Divine Energy cannot be incommunicative and unresponsive. As wheat plant grows out of wheat seed alone rather than from the gram seeds, a living, throbbing, thinking, brainy human being cannot be born out of an innate source. So the creative force of this living functioning universe is definitely a living entity perfect in all respects. All religious scriptures say with one voice that this Divine Creative Force is a living trinity of Truth, Mind and Harmony and

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a living embodiment of love and compassion :

ਭੂਲੀ ਮਾਲਨੀ ਹੈ ਏਉ ॥ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਜਾਗਤਾ ਹੈ ਦੇਉ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 479

In this, thou art mistaken, O lady-gardener.
The True Guru is the living Lord.

ਕਉੜਾ ਬੋਲਿ ਨ ਜਾਨੈ ਪੂਰਨ ਭਗਵਾਨੈ ਅਉਗਣੁ ਕੋ ਨ ਚਿਤਾਰੇ॥

ਅੰਗ - 784

The Perfect Lord, who thinks not of my demerits, knows not the bitter word.

Now the question arises whether we can observe this Energy. All religious scriptures, prophets, Gurus and *Pirs* affirm that it is possible to observe this phenomenon. Since this energy is extremely atomized, it needs an eye with the power of a microscopic lens to observe its presence.

ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਸੁਖਮੁ ਅਗਮੁ ਹੈ ਕਿਤੁ ਬਿਧਿ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਜਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 756

The sire Lord is subtle and inaccessible. In what way can one meet Him?

ਨਾਨਕ ਸੇ ਅਖੜੀਆਂ ਬਿਅੰਨਿ ਜਿਨੀ ਡਿਸੰਦੋ ਮਾ ਪਿਰੀ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 577

Nanak, different are those eyes, with which my Spouse is beheld.

ਗੁਰਹਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਓ ਲੋਇਨਾ ॥
ਏਤਹਿ ਉਤਹਿ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ

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ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਤੂੰਹੀ ਤੂੰਹੀ ਮੋਹਿਨਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 407*

The Guru has shown Thee to mine eyes, O Lord.
Here and there, in every soul and in every body,
Thou, Thou alone art contained, O Bewitcher.

Human constitution has another sense or faculty in addition to the five senses of smell, taste, touch, sight and speech. It is called a sense of experience or experiential sense. This faculty to experience is inherent in every human being and it can be activated or developed like other faculties. One can observe and experience the existence of the Divine Creator of this creation. This Divine energy, in its primal and permanent identity, is beyond the dimensions of any particular shape, colour or contours and can never be accessed through man's mental faculties. But it manifests itself through the medium of experiential faculty to fulfill their desperate yearning for His glimpse and to fortify their faith and devotion in Him. Once, this communication is established, the Divine energy discloses all its secrets and mysteries to its devotees :

ਅਦਿਸਟੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ ਸੋ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ॥
ਅੰਗ - 87

Through the Guru, he beholds with his eyes the

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unseen, unapproachable, unknowable and immaculate Lord.

ਬੇਦ ਕਤੇਬ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਹਭਾ ਹੂੰ ਬਾਹਰਾ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 397*

The Lord is beyond the Vedas and the four religious books of the Muslim, Christian and Jews. Nanak's King is seen manifest, everywhere.

ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਮਿਲਿਓ ਭਗਤਨ ਕਉ
ਜਨ ਸਿਉ ਪਰਦਾ ਲਾਹਿਓ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1299*

Liky wrap and woop, Thou art united with Thine devotees and for Thine slaves, Thou hast removed the veil off Thy face.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਸੰਗਿ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ਜਾਹਰਿ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 965*

The True Guru has manifestly shown me the Lord with me.

This "Truth-Mind-Harmony" Energy responds warmly to those who commutate with it. It speaks through a language of love to those who love it. It behaves as a sincere lover in this act of love.

ਕੰਠਿ ਲਗਾਇ ਅਪੁਨੇ ਜਨ ਰਾਖੇ ਅਪੁਨੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਪਿਆਰਾ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 609

Hugging to His bosom the Lord saves His

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slaves and their love for Him is sweet unto the Lord.

Besides this mutual communication of love, it performs all other functions on behalf of its devotee and fulfils all his needs. Being in love with its devotee, it becomes an instrument of service to him :

ਜਹ ਜਹ ਕਾਜ ਕਿਰਤਿ ਸੇਵਕ ਕੀ ਤਹਾ ਤਹਾ ਉਠਿ ਧਾਵੈ ॥
ਸੇਵਕ ਕਉ ਨਿਕਟੀ ਹੋਇ ਦਿਖਾਵੈ ॥
ਜੋ ਜੋ ਕਹੈ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਸੇਵਕੁ ਤਤਕਾਲ ਹੋਇ ਆਵੈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 403

Withersoever the business and affair of His slave is, thither the Lord runs.
To His servant, the Lord shows Himself to be near.
Whatever the servant asks his Master, forthwith comes to pass.

ਪਾਛੈ ਲਾਗੋ ਹਰਿ ਫਿਰੈ ਕਹਤ ਕਬੀਰ ਕਬੀਰ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1367*
The Lord follows me, saying "Kabir, O my Kabir".

The one and only one technique to invoke, understand and unite with this energy, as propounded by scriptures and great saints, is to remember it from the core of one's heart or to do *Naam Simran*. Man has given several names to this

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supreme energy. All these names are sacred and meaningful.

ਬਲਿਹਾਰੀ ਜਾਉ ਜੇਤੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਨਾਵ ਹੈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1168

I am a sacrifice unto Thine Names, as many as they are, O Lord.

Om, Param Atama, Ishwar, Ram, Govind, Madho, Hari, Khuda, Allah, God - all these names connote the same supreme power. Whatever name, out of these several names, appeals to a devotee, he should invoke this energy by reciting this name with love, faith and devotion slowly and slowly. The Supreme Divine Power responds to his call and manifests itself in a transparent manner. It fulfills his craving for His love and shares all secrets and mysteries about Itself. It makes its devotee as powerful, fearless, free of malice, eternal and immortal as It Itself is. One who gets an opportunity to unite with this Supreme Power in this modern age, he should call or remember His Name after shedding all his doubts, fears, clever mental calculations and fanciful cravings of his heart. He must call Him or remember His Name as desperately as a recently awakened child calls desperately for his mother. This Divine power responds to His devotee's call like a really

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affectionate mother and takes him in its embrace. This communication establishes such a bond which never breaks or disintegrates :

ਸਖੀ ਵਸਿ ਆਇਆ ਫਿਰਿ ਛੋਡਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ
ਇਹ ਰੀਤਿ ਭਲੀ ਭਗਵੰਤੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 249*

O my mates, once He comes under our power, he shall not, again, forsake us. This is the good custom of the Illustrious Lord.

ਹਰਿ ਹਰੇ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਣ ਨਿਧੇ ਹਰਿ ਸੰਤਨ ਕੈ ਵਸਿ ਆਏ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 780

God, the Lord Master is the Treasure of virtues and He the Lord is under the sway of His saints.

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Who Is Eligible To Access God?

(ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਣ ਮਿਲਦਾ ਹੈ?)

Bani of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* states :

ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 12*

This human body has come to thy hand.
This is thy chance to meet the Lord of the world.

Let us analyse to whom these lines have been addressed. If these lines have been addressed to a man, a spiritual devotee or a pilgrim, then which faculty of a human devotee's personality has been addressed to in these lines. Is human body being called upon to seek access to the Divine because He has endowed man with a human body? Is human body being asked to avail of this rare opportunity? But a thoughtful

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reflection will inform us that human body is only a container or a structure or a skeleton of bones and flesh. It is an inert or inane entity in itself without any sense of comprehension. As we cannot ask a physical object such as a wooden chair to seek an access to God, similarly a human body made of flesh and bones cannot be expected to seek access to God. Human body, by itself, can never have an access to God. No human body has ever united with or communicated with the Divine so far. Only he seeks access who aspires for such an access and who is capable of communicating. But human body, on its own, has neither the desire, nor comprehension nor even the capability to communicate and unite with the Divine.

Then, who has been called upon to communicate and unite with the Divine. Let us try to explore. A human being is an amalgamation of three components. These three components are human body, human soul and human mind or consciousness. When union for human body has been ruled out then is it human soul which needs to access the Divine? But we know that human soul is already perfect, immortal, detached and

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beyond life and death. There is no separation between the human soul and the Divine. As Sun's rays are integral part of the Sun, similarly human soul is inseparable from the Divine. These two are one and the same entity. Since these two entities are already united, there is no need for a fresh reunion. He alone joins or meets who is separated. One who is already united or is contained in each other, where is the need for a fresh attempt?

So when human body, on its own, is incapable of meeting the Divine and human soul is already integrated, then human mind/self alone is being called upon to seek an access to the Divine. Human body does not need any union with a spiritual entity such as God because human body is a plain physical structure of flesh and bones. Human soul, too, needs no fresh union. It is, therefore, the human mind or consciousness which needs to seek access to the Divine. So these lines have been addressed to the human mind or consciousness. The whole *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and its teachings are addressed to the human mind alone. When human body or human soul has been addressed to, the message is meant

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to be conveyed to the human mind/self only.

ਏ ਸਰੀਰਾ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਇਸੁ ਜਗ ਮਹਿ ਆਇ ਕੈ
ਕਿਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 921

O my body, what deed hast thou done by coming into this world?

Although human body has been addressed to in literal terms, but the import and spirit is meant to be conveyed to the mind. Now how does human mind or consciousness gets access to the Divine? Before we seek an answer to this question, let us first try to understand what we mean by the term or entity "human mind or consciousness". Where does it exist and what kind of environment it deals with? Our human senses or faculties such as our nose and eyes transmit signals or messages from the outside surrounding environment to the mind through a network of arteries called the nervous system. Mind, on its own, can not gather any information unless our physical senses or faculties transmit information to the mind. Mind continues to receive information through the other faculties and keeps on analyzing this information. Mind records a sensation of happiness or delight if eyes communicate a message after seeing a beautiful

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scene. Similarly, mind feels elated when our nose or sense of smell conveys a message of fragrance. But it feels depressed when a message of foul smell is transmitted to it. So, it proves that mind survives on the basis of information from outside. Good pleasing information delights the mind while bad unpleasant information depresses the mind.

As the outside environment keeps on changing and it hardly remains static even for a second, it is not possible that only delightful information will keep feeding the mind. Human senses keep on transmitting all kinds of information, both pleasant and unpleasant, depending on the occurrences occurring in the outside environment to the mind. As a result of this variegated information, human mind keeps on fluctuating between sorrow and joy.

It is the tendency of the human mind that it never wishes to experience sorrow, but always aspires for happiness. But his physical senses can never provide happiness forever. These faculties keep on feeding the mind with all kinds of mixed inputs of joy and sorrow gathered from the ever-changing environment around them. For example,

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when eyes convey to the mind that it is spring outside and the whole nature is brimming with blossoms, the mind registers a signal that the fragrance of the blooming flowers is extremely pleasant. Registering this information, the mind feels delighted and craves that spring may continue forever and beautiful flowers may continue to bloom and emit fine fragrance. But soon, the eyes send a message that the spring is over and autumn has set in. Those dazzling flowers of spring have faded. The trees have shed their green leaves. The trees are standing bare and naked without leaves. The nose informs the mind that it is unable to smell the fragrance of spring flowers now as all the flowers have withered and faded. At this, the mind feels depressed.

Mind craves for an eternal spring and its beauty and fragrance. But human senses can not keep it happy by continuously feeding it with the delightful scenes and fragrance of the spring. Since nature's and world's cycle keeps on changing, there can never be an eternal spring. Therefore, it is a human mind's misconception that human senses can provide permanent comfort and happiness.

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So a human mind, depending on sensual inputs for seeking happiness, always remains sad and suffering. This kind of afflicted human mind sometime seeks relief from God, prophets and saints and makes desperate supplications before them. In his confessional statements, he opens his heart before God and cries that although he always craved for happiness but he has been receiving a mixed bags of joys and sorrows. He admits that frequent sorrows turn his joys into grief. He declares that he has constructed palatial houses, planted green trees, amassed a lot of wealth with great struggle and hard work, but he has not been able to enjoy the comforts of these material assets. Several kinds of bodily ailments have turned these comforts into pain and sorrow. He always craved for youth, but age has caught up with him. His cooks prepare a variety of delicious dishes for him and try to serve him but his weak digestive system renders him unable to relish these dainty dishes. Old age has killed his digestion. His weak eyesight has crippled him from enjoying the beauty of the flowers in his garden as well other senses of nature's beauty He is unable to sleep on the most comfortable

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soft, and silken bed. Getting desperate, he prays to God to bless him with a technique which may enable him to lead a permanently happy life and which may make him immune from the bodily changes of physical degeneration and other external changes of environment.

When a person makes such a humble prayer out of complete desperation, then the benevolent *Satguru* blesses him with a technique of spiritual therapy or *Naam Simran* which is capable of liberating a person from the pull of the senses and providing a life of permanent bliss.

Liberated from the pulls of the senses and leading a life of unchanging spirituality, a spiritual devotee starts leading life of eternal bliss, independent of sensual inputs of joys and sorrow. It is a life of perfect happiness and sovereignty without dependence on sensual pleasures. Thus, leading a life purely at the spiritual level, his soul or consciousness gets permanently integrated with the Divine. After such an integration, it becomes an image and inseparable part of the Divine. Now he looks upon the life of senses and their created world of

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superficial sensual pleasures as an inferior and base animal existence. *Gurbani* describes this spiritual existence in the following words :

ਨਾਨਕ ਬਧਾ ਘਰੁ ਤਹਾਂ ਜਿਥੈ ਮਿਰਤੁ ਨ ਜਨਮੁ ਜਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 44

Nanak has founded his house on that (ground) where there is no death, birth and old age.

ਤਿਸ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ਪਰੁ ਮਨਾ ਜਿਸੁ ਜੇਵਡੁ ਅਵਰੁ ਨ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ਘਣਾ ਦੁਖੁ ਦਰਦੁ ਨ ਮੂਲੇ ਹੋਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 44

Seek His shelter, O' my Soul! whom none equals in greatness.
By remembering whom great peace is obtained and pain and distress absolutely touch (man) not.

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Naam Simran And Good Deeds

(ਨਾਮ ਜਪਣਾ ਅਤੇ ਸ਼ੁਭ ਅਮਲ)

A misconception is taking strong roots among educated Sikhs these days that human actions alone should be good and virtuous. There is no need to read *Gurbani*, do meditation and *Naam Simran*. Such people point out that since good deeds are the highest form of human activity, man's maximum effort should be to perform maximum good deeds. It is a wastage of time if one goes to a Gurudwara or listens to a *Gurbani* recitation, or reads *Gurbani* or does *Naam Simran*. For the best utilization of one's time, one must devote maximum time to do maximum noble good deeds.

The *Bani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* is very helpful

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in clarifying this misconception. There are innumerable references about the relative significance of good deeds and *Naam Simran* in Gurbani :

ਪੁੰਨ ਦਾਨ ਜਪ ਤਪ ਜੇਤੇ ਸਭ ਊਪਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 401

As many as there are alms-giving, charities, recitations and penances, above them all is the God's Name.

ਕੋਟਿ ਕਰਮ ਬੰਧਨ ਕਾ ਮੂਲੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਭਜਨ ਬਿਨੁ ਬਿਰਥਾ ਪੂਲੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1149

Myriads of rituals are the root of involvements. Without the Lord's meditation, one only gathers the worthless bundle of straw.

ਮੂੜੇ ਰਾਮੁ ਜਪਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਸਾਰਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 19

O' fool! preserve virtues and remember Pervading God.

ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੈ ਤੁਲਿ ਨ ਪੁਜਣੀ ਜੇ ਲਖ ਕੋਟੀ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 62

I perform lakhs and millions of religious rites, all these become not equal to God's Name.

ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਬਿਸਾਰਿਆ ਬਹੁ ਕਰਮ ਦ੍ਰਿੜਾਏ ॥
ਭਵਜਲਿ ਡੂਬੇ ਦੂਜੈ ਭਾਏ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 231

He forgets God's Name, and performs many

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rituals.
Due to duality, he is drowned in the terrible world-ocean.

ਨਾਮ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਨ ਲਾਵੈ ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਕਰਮ ਕਰਤੋ ਨਰਕਿ ਜਾਵੈ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 240***

The man, who embraces not affection for the Name, goes to hell even thou he performs millions of ceremonial rites.

ਬਿਨੁ ਸਿਮਰਨ ਹੈ ਆਤਮ ਘਾਤੀ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 239***

Without remembering the Lord, the man is a self-murderer.

According to the Sikh Gurus and their *Gurbani*, no human deed is superior to the practice of *Naam Simran*. All good deeds, howsoever noble, are still less significant than *Naam Simran*. It is suicidal for a human being to shirk from *Naam Simran*. A person, entirely dependent on good deeds without the practice of *Naam Simran*, will not succeed in the journey of life. A person, performing good deeds without doing any *Naam Simran*, will still be damned.

Why does the *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* lays more stress on *Naam Simran* than the

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performance of good deeds? Why do the Sikh Gurus rate *Naam Simran* higher than the doing of good deeds? They have gone to the extent of declaring a person deserving to be sent to hell who performs good deeds without doing *Naam Simran*. Do the Sikh Guru's opinions about the significance of *Naam Simran* and their stress on its practice is misplaced? Do they overestimate the significance of *Naam Simran* or is it a fact based on scientific evidence which is likely to hold good forever? Let us take the case of a person who spends whole of his life in the performance of good deeds. He alleviates the suffering of the people; shares his earning with others; sympathises with the poor; speaks the truth; does not defraud anybody; nor usurps anybody's share, but neither reads *Gurbani* nor meditates. He dies at the ripe age of seventy five and keeps on performing good deeds till his last moment of death. The people of the world would declare such a person as the most successful person. But *Gurbani* does not consider such a person to be successful. Why? What is the main objection? The explanation is that *Gurbani* aims at making a human being much more versatile than a mere

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mechanical device for the **single** act of performing good deeds. The Sikh Guru's concept of a *Gursikh* is not limited to the doer of only good deeds which human society deems to be good and ideal deeds. A *Gursikh* or a *Gurmukh* must be more versatile, profound and higher than the mere doer of good deeds alone. A person who dies at the ripe age of seventy five after devoting whole of his life to the performance of good deeds may take pride in the fact that he has accomplished good deeds throughout his life, but such a person, in Guru's estimation, will remain ignorant about the real significance and aim of life. He will remain ignorant about the operation of the cycle of birth and death, the consequent suffering involved in this cycle, the way to get out of this cycle and get liberated from its vicious cycle. He will remain ignorant about the way to unite with the Godhead. In other words, a person passing through lacs of human births and deaths and performing good deeds throughout these lives will still remain ignorant of spiritual aspect of life and its significance. Man's highest aim in life, according to Sikh Guru's teachings, is to seek a union with the source of all virtues, the Divine

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Waheguru and reach a spiritual state when a human being becomes as free from fear and malice as the Divine *Waheguru* Himself is. In Guru's opinion, performance of good deeds must lead to and result in realizing the supremacy of *Naam Simran* and start its practice :

ਕਰਮ ਕਰਤੂਤਿ ਬੋਲਿ ਬਿਸਥਾਰੀ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮੁ ਫਲੁ ਹੂਆ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 351

The vine of good actions and true character is spread out and it bears the fruit of Lord's Name.

Good deeds must lead a person to the source of all good which is *Waheguru*. *Naam Simran* is the ultimate fruit that a tree, planted and nurtured with good deeds, bears. Performance of good deeds without the performance of *Naam Simran* leads to swelling of human pride. On the contrary, a person performing *Naam Simran* sheds his ego and leans towards *Waheguru*. A spiritual devotee or practitioner of good deeds remains humble since he takes no pride in the performance of good deeds and attributes his good deeds to the inspiration received from or bestowed upon by the Divine *Waheguru*. There is always a limit and limitation to the good deeds

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performed by a person devoid of *Naam Simran*. He fails to perform good deeds beyond a certain limit. For instance, a person devoid of *Naam Simran* who draws a monthly salary of five hundred rupees may be able to resist a bribe offer of rupees one thousand. His mind may start wavering at an offer of one lac rupees as bribe. But he will definitely succumb to the temptation of one crore rupees if offered in bribe. On the contrary, a man steeped in *Naam Simran*, who has realized that all his material needs are being provided by the King of kings and the sovereign Lord of all sovereigns, will never succumb to the highest offer of bribe or temptation. The moral character of a spiritually realized person after doing *Naam Simran* becomes so resistant and impregnable to human temptations that bribe offers of even several crores can not tempt him to succumb to such offers. He is assured of Divine assistance and benevolence at each step of his life. He has received through *Naam Simran* what no material offer can ever offer, then why should he succumb to any human and material temptation? Why should he get himself humiliated by succumbing to any human temptation when the

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source of whole creation is willing to provide him with everything at every moment of his life. There is a limit to the goodness of good deeds, but benefits of *Naam Simran* are immense and unlimited indeed :

ਸਭ ਤੇ ਪਰੈ ਪਰੈ ਤੇ ਊਚਾ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰ ਅਥਾਹਿਓ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 1299

Thou, O Lord, art the Remotest of the remote, the Higliest of all, Profound, Immovable and Unfathomable.

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Yoga And *Naam Simran*

(ਯੋਗ ਅਤੇ ਨਾਮ ਸਿਮਰਨ)

There are two ways to seek access to *Waheguru*, to learn about His temperament/nature and to have a glimpse of the Divine. One of these paths is the path of Yoga. It involves a deliberate, calculated control over one's breath as well and all other senses and focus one's entire energy inwards to seek an access to the Divine. The other path is the path of *Naam Simran*. It involves concentration on the Name of God by detaching one's mind from external world of senses and to have a glimpse of the Divine by invoking His grace through *Naam Simran*. So far as glimpse of the Divine is concerned, both these paths are equally beneficial. But beyond this, the path of *Naam Simran* proves to be more advantageous than the path of Yoga. A practitioner of yoga

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finds an access to the Divine after controlling his breath with a lot of hard effort and determination for a limited period but returns to his normal human condition after sometime. There is a world of difference between the two states of a yogic practitioner – normal human state and the yogic state. So the moment his yogic state or *samadhi* is over, a yogi falls down to the ordinary level of human existence. Moreover, the yogic practice of controlling one's breath is a very strenuous and long term exercise which is not easier to adopt for an ordinary man of the world. On the contrary, the path of *Naam Simran* is quite easy and very beneficial. After a short practice of *Naam Simran* with one's tongue verbally as well as while breathing, it becomes a spontaneous tireless practice to keep in touch with the Divine. Whereas a yogi cannot maintain himself in a yogic state forever, a practitioner of *Naam Simran* can always remain in communion with the Divine and enjoy His Grace. Whereas a yogi's communion with the Divine involves a hard physical exercise and extraordinary Yogic Asanas and lasts for a limited duration, a devotee's communion with the Divine is effortlessly spontaneous and natural as

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well as prolonged in duration often resulting in establishing a permanent relationship with the Divine. Whenever the great yogis have realized this difference, they have accepted the supremacy of the *Naam Simran* pathway.

Colonel Vasdev was once known as a famous yogi. But after a chance encounter with a Sindhi female *Gursikh* lady and after practising *Naam Simran* as instructed by this devout lady, Colonel Vasdev-turned-yogi realized the supremacy of the *Naam Simran* pathway. Later on, he became a great practitioner of *Naam Simran*. He used to sleep for a very short while at night and spend most of his time in *Naam Simran*. Despite this, he enjoyed a very good health.

I have come across a book entitled "Guru Gyan" on this topic. The author has described an interesting episode about his spiritual guide in its preface. This article clearly accepts the supremacy of *Naam Simran* over yoga. This article given in the preface of this book is being reproduced in original for the benefit of the readers of Atam Science. This article is titled "Apni Baat" or "My story". It follow in the next chapter.

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My Story

(ਅਪਨੀ ਬਾਤ)

I was born in the state of Bengal. A yogi used to visit our town occasionally. His name was Swami Brahama Nanda Ji. He led the life of a mystic. He possessed the power of materializing whatever he promised through his word.

I am now one hundred and thirty four years old. There are very few yogis of his calibre in India. My father had immense faith in the Swami Ji. One day he arrived at our door and started shouting loudly asking for the return of what belonged to him. He had come very rarely in this town prior to this visit. The whole family felt astonished at his sudden arrival. His words were more astonishing than his arrival. My father failed to guess his demand, despite his best efforts to know his Guru's mind. The Swami Ji

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repeated his demand twice again. Kneeling on his knees, my father beseeched Swami Ji to disclose his demand. Swami Ji entered our house and placing his hand on my shoulder, demanded that this boy did not deserve to stay at home. He must be handed over to him (Swami Ji). Although we were four brothers, but it was not easy for any parent to part with their son. It was not easy to refuse the Swami Ji's demand either. Every member of the family looked at each other's face dumb founded. Swami Ji repeated his demand and left for his hermitage. My parents paid a visit to Swami Ji's place in the evening. What transpired between him and my parents was not conveyed to me. But the next morning, I was handed over to Swami Ji. After staying in our town for six months, Swami Ji left that place taking me along with him.

He was an erudite scholar of Sanskrit and possessed powers of materializing and providing things with his words. He instructed me in all *Yogic Asnas* and imparted all kinds of knowledge associated with these *Asnas*. He made every opportunity available to me to interact with and receive knowledge from many other yogis. We

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reached Punjab after pilgrimage through the states of Madras, Bihar, Orissa, Bombay and cities of Kanpur, Agra and Prayagraj at Allahbad. Here we came across a saint of the *Udassi* sect. We kept on interacting and exchanging views with this saintly person. His name was Swami Satyanand. He narrated the Sikh philosophy and Sikh tradition in such an impressive manner that swami Brahmanand felt mesmerized. After a visit to the Sikh shrine, Darbar Sahib Harimandir, he became a permanent devotee of the Sikh Gurus and their ideology. After spending sometime in Punjab, we returned to Haridwar. One day he was sitting calm and quiet. Suddenly he started sobbing. I asked him the reason for tears in his eyes. He answered that he had wasted his life in meaningless activity of yogic *Asnns* whereas the essence of Divinity lay in the Sikh Guru's philosophy and the Sikh way of life. He would have to be born once again in a Sikh family for his deliverance. With these words, he shed his mortal frame.

Now, I, his disciple, also meditate on the sacred name of *Waheguru*. I practiced yogic *Asnns* under the guidance of accomplished Yogis for

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many years at a stretch. The amount of peace and bliss that I have experienced through *Naam Simran,* I have never experienced earlier through any other practice.

Guru's path of *Naam Simran,* is the perfect path. It is difficult to express the greatness of Guru's word. Teachings of Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind Singh are the elixir of life. There is no other scripture more beneficial than *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib.*

It is my bounden duty to spread this message of my Guru which he gave me in his last moments. It is a fact hat whatever can be achieved through the effortless spontaneous practice of *Naam Simran* cannot be achieved through the strenuous exercises of other practices. It is my felt-experience and an experience about which there is no controversy.

Nitya Nand

Neeli Garhi (Rishikesh)

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Discovery Of *Naam Simran*

(ਨਾਮ ਦੀ ਕਾਢ)

Ours is an age of science. Science has made every aspect of human life interesting and modernized. Various means of transport such as railways, motorcars, trains and ships have made travelling quiete easier and comfortable. As a result, the problem of geographical distances has been greatly reduced. Radio has further reduced the problem of distance. One can convey one's views all across the world through radio broadcasting. Scientific inventions have influenced every aspect of human life, be it agriculture, trade, construction, design and art, war, technology and management and governance.

When we observe human beings travelling by aeroplanes; living in the multi storied well-furnished houses; sleeping on comfortable silken

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mattresses; listening to the world news over the radio and watching movies on the cinematic screen in the cinema halls, we feel that the modern man has become very prosperous and happy.

But a deeper analysis will reveal that it is a misconception that man has become happier with the help of scientific inventions and aids. The truth, infact, is exactly contrary to this misconception. There is no doubt that means of human comfort have increased with the increase in scientific inventions. But this is also true that with the increase in the means of human convenience and comfort there has been a corresponding increase in human worries, tensions, fears, aspirations as well as human avarice. Despite surfeit of human comforts, man does not seem to be happy. What can be the possible reason for such a dichotomy?

The fact is that man is not a physical and biological body or entity alone. Human mind or psyche or consciousness is far more significant than human body. Human, bodily comforts can provide happiness to man upto a certain extent but these are incapable of providing complete

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happiness. Good food, clothes and other bodily comforts provide comfort to both human body and mind to some extent. But human mind has many other requirements besides the provision of human comforts. For instance, if a person, despite being very rich and well-provided with all kinds of human comforts and material assets, is still avaricious, fraudulent and a swindler, then such a person can never lead a happy life despite the possession of every human comfort. If a wealthy person always lives in the fear of losing his wealth and a sense of insecurity, then such a rich person will continue to suffer despite being rich. It has been observed that although scientific developments have made human life more comfortable, but man, as a human being, has become more greedy, more selfish, more malicious and disappointed and frustrated. The richest people, the most affluent nations and countries are not leading a life of happiness. The present international situation bears a testimony to this fact of life. The three victorious nations in the second world war - America, Russia and Britain are three leading world powers. Although the people of these countries enjoy every human comfort in terms of food, shelter and dress, but

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their mutual fears, greed, and mistrust of each other have made their people more hostile and suspicious towards each other instead of making them happy.

Those who expect scientific inventions of technology to provide humanity with peace and happiness are living under an illusion. They should realize that unless human beings and humanity imbibe and cultivate feelings of love, trust, the quality of sharing with others, contentment and sense of sacrifice for others, human mind can not live in peace and happiness, despite the excess of material comforts and means. Human mind rather than human body is the real source of human happiness. Even the physical comforts are enjoyed by the human mind. Therefore, unless human mind is not happy and peaceful, man can never be happy in the real sense.

The biggest handicap which scientific inventions suffer from is that they fail to provide satisfaction and happiness to the human mind. Looking at this handicap, we shall realise the relevance of the discovery of *Naam Simran* made by the ancient sages of oriental countries. All the

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scientific discoveries and inventions of science made by the modern scientists can not surpass the contribution of the spiritual sages of the East who have been able to provide peace, contentment and happiness to man through their discovery of *Naam Simran*.

Practice of *Naam Simran* makes man introspective rather than an extrovert. It helps man in understanding his own self and its real aspirations. It leads man to communicate with the Divine and His will and Nature. It produces an urge in man to be one with the Divine.

Finally, it makes man an image and embodiment of the Divine. A person, steeped in *Naam Simran*, leads his life with the grace of all-pervasive and eternal creator-God.

A spiritual devotee devoted to *Naam Simran* sheds his complete selfishness and greed when he observes God providing sustenance to the whole universe and when he realizes that the Divine power is capable of sustaining and maintaining this whole universe even if the numerical strength of His creation on this universe increases thousand times more. Such a person, divested of

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selfishness and greed, imbibes feelings of love, sacrifice, service, and sharing his possessions with others. Only a person, ignorant of Almighty *Waheguru* and His inexhaustible resources, lives in greed and selfishness. On the contrary, a person, aware of *Waheguru*'s bountiful nature and His endless resources, leads an effortlessly tension free, happy and carefree life :

ਰਾਮੁ ਰਾਜਾ ਨਉ ਨਿਧਿ ਮੇਰੈ ॥
ਸੰਪੈ ਹੇਤੁ ਕਲਤੁ ਧਨੁ ਤੇਰੈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1157

The sovereign Lord is my nine treasures.
Thou hast the love of property, woman and wealth.

All the scientific discoveries and inventions of science taken together can not provide that level of peace, knowledge and power which *Naam Simran* can provide. Therefore, all the scientific discoveries and inventions can never match the benefits provided by *Naam Simran*.

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God's Name Is Always Beneficial

(ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ)

When we plant different types of plants like Neem, mango and rose, it is essential to provide moisture to their roots by irrigating these with water. These plants will wither without adequate moisture. But water produces different types of result when it enters their roots. It increases the content of bitterness in a Neem tree; sweetness in a mango tree and fragrance in a rose plant. Water that enters their roots is one and the same, but it produces different effects in these plants according to their genetic base. Similarly, this world is inhabited by two kinds of people. While one category belongs to the ego-centric category; the other belongs to the Guru-oriented category. God's Name assists both these categories of

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human beings according to their different mindsets.

The only difference between the water therapy of trees and Naam-therapy of human beings is that whereas water does not change the nature of a tree, for instance water does not convert the bitterness of a Neem tree into sweetness, *Naam Simran* converts an ego-centric person (*manmukh*) into a Guru oriented (*Gurmukh*) person.

The first category of human beings are called (*manmukhs*) or ego-centric persons who follow and act upon their impulses and instincts. Such people are selfish who love their friends and members of their families and hate their adversaries. They are always led by their selfish and vested interests and always give priority to their own interests, their personal well-being and their own fame, prestige and reputation. They do not bother about anything which does not promote their vested interest. Addressing this category of human beings, *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* exhorts them to start doing *Naam Simran*. *Gurbani* assures such people that all their problems will get

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resolved, their health will improve; their mental tensions will disappear; prosperity, affluence and fame will fall into their lap and make their life worth-living and meaningful if they start devoting sometime to reading of *Gurbani* and start doing *Naam-Simran.*

ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਤੇਰੀ ਜਾਇ ਬਲਾਇ ॥
ਸਰਬ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਵਸੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਇ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 193***

By remembering God, thy calamity shall be averted und all the joys shall come and abide within thy mind.

ਬਿਪਤਿ ਤਹਾ ਜਹਾ ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਨੁ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਕੋਟਿ ਅਨੰਦ ਜਹ ਹਰਿ ਗੁਨ ਗਾਹੀ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 197***

Calamity is there, where God's meditation is not.
Millions of joys are, where God's glories are chanted.

ਦੁਖ ਭੰਜਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ਜੀ ਦੁਖ ਭੰਜਨੁ ਤੇਰਾ ਨਾਮੁ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 218

The Destroyer of sorrow is Thy Name, O Lord, the Destroyer of sorrow is Thy Name.

ਜਪਿ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਏ ਕਾਮ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 218***

By remembering Him, the affairs are adjusted.

ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ॥

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ਜਾ ਕਉ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਅਜਾਮਲੁ ਉਧਰਿਓ ਗਨਿਕਾ ਹੂ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1008

Peace-giving ever is the Lord's Name.
Meditating on which Ajamal was saved and the courtesan obtained emancipation.

ਨਾਮ ਰੰਗਿ ਸਰਬ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 279

Through the love of God's Name, all the peace is gained.

ਜਿਸੁ ਧਨ ਕਉ ਚਾਰਿ ਕੁੰਟ ਉਠਿ ਧਾਵਹਿ ॥
ਸੋ ਧਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਸੇਵਾ ਤੇ ਪਾਵਹਿ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਸੁਖ ਕਉ ਨਿਤ ਬਾਛਹਿ ਮੀਤ ॥
ਸੋ ਸੁਖੁ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗਿ ਪਰੀਤਿ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਸੋਭਾ ਕਉ ਕਰਹਿ ਭਲੀ ਕਰਨੀ ॥
ਸਾ ਸੋਭਾ ਭਜੁ ਹਰਿ ਕੀ ਸਰਨੀ ॥
ਅਨਿਕ ਉਪਾਵੀ ਰੋਗੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਰੋਗੁ ਮਿਟੈ ਹਰਿ ਅਵਖਧੁ ਲਾਇ ॥
ਸਰਬ ਨਿਧਾਨ ਮਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ॥
ਜਪਿ ਨਾਨਕ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਪਰਵਾਨੁ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 288

The wealth after which thou runnest in four directions, that wealth thou shalt obtain by serving God.
The peace which thou, ever, desirest, O friend that peace thou shalt have by loving the guild of saints.
The glory, for which thou performest good acts, that glory thou shalt find by hastening to God

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for protection.
The malady which is not cured by many remedies, that malady is vanished by administering the medicine of God's Name.
Of all the treasures, God's Name is the best treasure.
Utter it, O Nanak, and thou shalt be acceptable in God's court.

ਕਲਿ ਤਾਤੀ ਠਾਂਢਾ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਉ ॥
ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖ ਪਾਉ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 288*
This Dark-age is hot and cool is the God's Name.
Remember, remember it and obtain the everlasting peace.

ਸਰਬ ਕਲਿਆਣ ਸੁਖ ਨਿਧਿ ਨਾਮੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 290*
Lord's Name is the treasure of all the comforts and joys.

ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵੈ ਸਰਬ ਫਲ ਪਾਵੈ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਸੁਖੀਆ ਹੂਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 407*
He, who remembers the Name, obtains all the boons. That man becomes happy.

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤੁ ਪੀਵਹੁ ਸਦਾ ਚਿਰੁ ਜੀਵਹੁ
ਹਰਿ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਅਨਦ ਅਨੰਤਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 496*
Ever quaff the Nectar of God's Name. May thou live long and may the meditation of God afford

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thee endless delight.

ਰੰਗ ਤਮਾਸਾ ਪੂਰਨ ਆਸਾ ਕਬਹਿ ਨ ਬਿਆਪੈ ਚਿੰਤਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 496
May joy and playful pleasures be thine; May thine hopes be realised and may thou never be worn by care.

ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਗਵੰਤ ਭਜਨ ਬਿਨੁ ਸੁਖੁ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਭੀ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1231
O slave Nanak, without the Lord's meditation, there is no peace even in dream.

ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1008*
Peace-giving ever is the Lord's Name.

As soon as a man, inspired by *Gurbani* reading, starts doing *Naam-Simran* and getting benefited by its positive results, then he keeps on getting transformed from an ego-centric person to a Guru-oriented person. Guru's teachings bring about a transformation in his mindset and thinking. It widens his mental canvas. It tells him that *Waheguru* the Divine is a greater well-wisher and benefactor of him than he is of his own self. It teaches him that it is the human ego which has narrowed down the boundaries of world and life. It instructs man that he should shed his narrow, egoistic approach and grow out of it. The whole

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world would appear to be his own if he gets out of his narrow-mindedness. He would realize that the Divine Creator is his real parent who loves him and is always keen to enhance his prestige. If he gives up his ego, he will find that the whole world belongs to the One and the same Creator who sustains and maintains this world. He is as all-pervasive and omnipresent in each and every particle as he is present in human body. It is human ego which has obliterated his vision of *Waheguru* and made man captive in his egoistic cell. Ego's dominance is due to man's ignorance of the Divine. Man has voluntarily confined him into his narrow self-created egoistic boundaries. But the fact is that man, being an image and integral part of the Divine is born free and independent. The Divine *Waheguru* is always inviting and eagerly waiting for man to come out of his ego and come to His embrace. He is ever ready to own him and make him the sovereign of this world :

ਬਾਪੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਸਦ ਚਰੰਜੀਵੀ ॥
ਭਾਈ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਜੀਵੀ ॥
ਮੀਤ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਸਦਾ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ॥
ਕੁਟੰਬੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸੀ ॥
ਹਮ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਇਆ ਤਾਂ ਸਭਹਿ ਸੁਹੇਲੇ ॥

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ਗੁਰਿ ਪੂਰੈ ਪਿਤਾ ਸੰਗਿ ਮੇਲੇ ॥
ਮੰਦਰ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਚੇ ॥
ਦੇਸ ਮੇਰੇ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਅਪੂਛੇ ॥
ਰਾਜੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਨਿਹਚਲੁ ॥
ਮਾਲੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ਅਖੁਟੁ ਅਬੇਚਲੁ ॥
ਸੋਭਾ ਮੇਰੀ ਸਭ ਜੁਗ ਅੰਤਰਿ ॥
ਬਾਜ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਬਾਨ ਬਨੰਤਰਿ ॥
ਕੀਰਤਿ ਹਮਰੀ ਘਰਿ ਘਰਿ ਹੋਈ ॥
ਭਗਤਿ ਹਮਾਰੀ ਸਭਨੀ ਲੋਈ ॥
ਪਿਤਾ ਹਮਾਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੇ ਮਾਝ ॥
ਪਿਤਾ ਪੂਤ ਰਲਿ ਕੀਨੀ ਸਾਂਝ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਉ ਪਿਤਾ ਪਤੀਨੇ ॥
ਪਿਤਾ ਪੂਤ ਏਕੈ ਰੰਗਿ ਲੀਨੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1141

Ever ever-alive is my Father.
My Imperishable are my friends, My family abides within its own 'Home'.
I have obtained peace, every one is then rendered peaceful.
The Perfect Guru has united me with my Father.
Pause.
The highest of all are my mansions.
My countries are unquestionably infinite.
Ever-stable is my Kingdom.
My wealth is inexhaustible and everlasting.
My glory rings through all the ages.
All the places and spaces are replete with my celebrity.

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My praise resounds through all houses.
My love-worship is known amongst all the people.
My father has become manifest within my mind.
The father and the son have met together in partnership.
Says Nanak, when the Father is pleased with me, then the Father and the son are merged in the same love.

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Can We Comprehend God?

(ਕੀ ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਦੀ ਸਮਝ ਆ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ?)

Scriptures of all the religions have described the Divine in terms of infinity such as endless, limitless, illimitable, immeasurable, invisible and independent. *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* also describes *Waheguru* as beyond human comprehension and beyond any human reckoning.

ਤੇਰਾ ਵਰਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਪੈ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਲਖੀਐ
ਤੇਰੀ ਕੁਦਰਤਿ ਕਉਨੁ ਬੀਚਾਰੇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 670*

Thy colour is known not, nor is Thine form seen.
Who can realise Thy power?

ਜਿਨਿ ਕੀਏ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਬ੍ਰਹਮੰਡਾ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਲਖਨੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 907

He who created continents, spheres and universe; That Lord can be known not.

This aspect of incomprehensibility about the

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Divine can create doubts and even frustration in the mind of a spiritual seeker. He may argue that if *Waheguru* is really beyond human reckoning and human comprehension, then it is not worth while to undertake such a spiritual pursuit. Normally, we pursue an analysis of a project in which we expect to reach some conclusions. But a subject about which it is uncertain to comprehend it thoroughly, its study is avoided. Another obstacle in the way of carrying out a research in the spiritual discipline is man's limited aspirations. Ordinary human beings have no time for carrying out a spiritual journey. They remain bogged down in their material pursuits. Thus, these two factors of excessive involvement in material pursuits and the much-talked about frustration about achieving any tangible results in a spiritual pursuit have become the major road blocks in the undertaking of a spiritual voyage.

But a proper study of the *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib* can allay most of our doubts and fears regarding this pursuit. *Gurbani* addresses two categories of human beings. The first category consists of those who try to comprehend the Divine with their intelligence quotient or on the

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strength of their mental faculties. The second group consists of those who, accepting the limitations of their mental faculties, seek guidance from the spiritual experience of the Sikh Gurus and their description of their experience in *Gurbani*. *Gurbani* has labeled these two categories of human beings as *Manmukhs* (Ego-centric persons) and *Gurmukhs* (Guru-oriented persons).

Gurbani states that God or *Waheguru* is infinite, immeasurable, beyond reckoning, inscrutable and inexpressible for those who seek to comprehend Him through the use of their mental faculties. And purely rational and logical argumentation. On the other hand, God does not appear to be incomprehensible and inscrutable for those who seek through faith, devotion and truly earnest endeavour, despite the fact that He is really eternal and infinite. *Gurbani* states :

ਜਿਸਹਿ ਜਗਾਇ ਪੀਆਵੈ ਇਹੁ ਰਸੁ ਅਕਥ ਕਥਾ ਤਿਨਿ ਜਾਨੀ॥
ਅੰਗ - 13

He, whom God awakens to drink this essence of His Name, comes to know the discourse of the ineffable Lord.

ਤਿਸੁ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਰੇਖਿਆ ਘਟਿ ਘਟਿ ਦੇਖਿਆ
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਵਣਿਆ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 130

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He has no form or out line, and is seen within all the hearts. The inscrutable Lord is known through the Guru.

ਅਗਮੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਸਭ ਤੇ ਊਚਾ
ਗੁਰ ਕੈ ਸਬਦਿ ਲਖਾਵਣਿਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 130

The unapproachable and unapprehensible Lord is the highest of all. By the Guru's instruction He is known.

ਬ੍ਰਹਮੈ ਕਥਿ ਕਥਿ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਰਾਮ ਭਗਤਿ ਬੈਠੇ ਘਰਿ ਆਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 327

By continually dilating upon Him, Brahma has not found God's limit. But by virtue of devotional service, the Lord has come and sat in my home.

ਗੁਰਬਾਣੀ ਹਰਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 366

Through Gurbani, the Incomprehensible Lord is comprehended.

ਆਦਿ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰੁ ਪਿਆਰਾ
ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 436

The True Guru has shown me the limitless, Unseen and the darling Primal Lord.

ਕਾਇਆ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਆਪੇ ਵਸੈ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਲਖਿਆ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਮਨਮੁਖੁ ਮੁਗਧੁ ਬੂਝੈ ਨਾਹੀ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਭਾਲਣਿ ਜਾਈ ॥
ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਸੇਵੇ ਸਦਾ ਸੁਖੁ ਪਾਏ ਸਤਿਗੁਰਿ ਅਲਖੁ ਦਿਤਾ ਲਖਾਈ॥
ਅੰਗ - 754

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Within the body abides the Lord Himself. He is indiscernible and can be discerned not.
The silly apostate understands this thing not and goes abroad in search of Him.
He, who serves the True Guru, obtains permanent peace. The True Guru has shown me the unseen Lord.

ਮਨੁ ਬੁਧਿ ਅਰਪਿ ਧਰਉ ਗੁਰ ਆਗੈ
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਮੈ ਅਕਥੁ ਕਥਈਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 834

Dedicating my soul and intellect, I place them before the Guru.
By Guru's grace I utter the Unutterable One.

ਨਾਮਦੇਉ ਨਾਰਾਇਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਗੁਰੁ ਭੇਟਤ ਅਲਖੁ ਲਖਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 874

Similarly Nam Dev has obtained the Lord.
Meeting the Guru, I have seen the Unseen Lord.

ਸਹਸ ਸਿਆਣਪ ਨਹ ਮਿਲੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁੜੀਏ
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਾਤਾ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 541

By thousands of clevernesses He is attained not, O my soul. Slave Nanak has known his Lord through the Guru.

ਗੁਰ ਬਿਨੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨ ਲਖੀਐ ਭਾਈ ਜਗੁ ਬੂਡੈ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 637

Without the Guru, the unseen Lord is not seen and the world is drowned, shorn of its honour.

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All these hymns of *Gurbani* prove that only those comprehend and experience the incomprehensible Divine who adopt the spiritual road map laid down by the *Gurbani* and travel according to that road map to reach their destination.

It must be clearly understood and remembered that a union with the Divine is a spiritual experience rather than a matter for mental comprehension. After passing through this spiritual experience, a *Gurmukh* or a spiritual devotee keeps on becoming aware more and more about the true nature of the Divine, his Divine attributes and his own relationship with Him. As a *Gurmukh* goes on getting intimate with the Divine through the medium of *Naam Simran,* the Divine goes on bestowing him with more and more Divine attributes. Ultimately, a *Gurmukh,* following Guru Nanak's teachings and practicing *Naam Simran,* becomes an image and embodiment of the Divine himself. Arriving at this spiritual stage, a *Gurmukh* gets a complete comprehension about the Divine and all his doubts, misconceptions and apprehensions get resolved.

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ਉਤਰਿ ਗਇਓ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਨ ਕਾ ਸੰਸਾ ਜਬ ਤੇ ਦਰਸਨੁ ਪਾਇਆ॥

ਅੰਗ - 1218

The anxiety of my mind has departed, since I obtained Thine vision.

Another doubt can arise in the mind of a devotee that since human beings can comprehend a phenomenon only through the exercise of their mental faculties, how can a *Gurmukh* comprehend *Waheguru* the Divine which is beyond mental comprehension. The only plausible explanation to clear this apprehension is that a *Gurmukh* or a devotee comprehends the Divine and unites with Him only through a spiritual experience or spiritual realization. In other words, it is a spiritual revelation which dawns upon a devotee during the process of *Naam Simran*. This revelation remains embedded in a devotee's memory even long after that moment of experience is over. As we continue to relish the fine taste of a delicious fruit much after its consumption, a *Gurmukh* continues to cherish the bliss of a spiritual revelation much after his moment of epiphany. In both the activities of consuming a fruit as well as experiencing a spiritual bliss, human mind is expectant and receptive rather than being hostile

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and indifferent. It is for this reason that human memory gets stamped permanently with the residual taste of both these experiences. The only difference between the two situations of tasting a fruit and undergoing a spiritual experience is that in the first activity/situation, human tongue tastes a fruit and conveys its response to the mind on the basis of which mind declares that fruit to be delicious or otherwise, but in the second situation, all the sensual faculties as well as the mind have to be switched off and a vacuum created for experiencing the spiritual revelation. Since a *Manmukh* (an ego-centric person) does not learn the technique of becoming introspective after controlling his senses and remains ignorant of the inner spiritual bliss, he goes on according importance to the external world and its objects. On the contrary, a *Gurmukh* (a Guru-oriented person) becomes introspective through Guru Nanak's delineated *Naam Simran* therapy and becomes a permanent recipient of inner spiritual experience. As a citrus tree, after being grafted with the stem of a sweet orange, starts bearing oranges, similarly a *Manmukh*, after being administered the rejuvenating doses of *Gurbani*

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gets converted into a *Gurmukh* and becomes worthy of sharing an experience of the Divine.

Gurbani also claims that after a human being becomes a *Gurmukh,* he develops a skill to comprehend the incomprehensible Divine. This comprehension encourages him further to move ahead in his spiritual quest. Moreover, the quest which holds the potential of uniting the human with the Divine and which holds a promise of conferring all kinds of happiness and bliss, becomes a pleasant quest and a pursuit worthy of human cultivation. After this, no other occupation or pursuit seems worth pursuing.

A subject which becomes completely comprehensible gives us a command over that subject. For instance, a thorough knowledge of electricity has made man a master of this wonderful energy. By the same analogy, *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib* makes a declaration that *Waheguru* or the Divine once united with His spiritual devotees through *Naam Simran* not only becomes completely comprehensible, but becomes totally accessible to His devotees to the extent of being pliable to their wishes. He starts protecting

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His devotees in every eventuality, solving all their problems and bestowing all kinds of honours on them. *Gurbani* states that *Waheguru* the Divine gets so much integrated and involved with his *Gurmukh* devotees that the two can never be separated or parted :

ਸਖੀ ਵਸਿ ਆਇਆ ਫਿਰਿ ਛੋਡਿ ਨ ਜਾਈ
ਇਹ ਰੀਤਿ ਭਲੀ ਭਗਵੰਤੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 249*

O my mates, once He comes under our power, he shall not, again, forsake us. This is the good custom of the Illustrious Lord.

ਓਤਿ ਪੋਤਿ ਸੇਵਕ ਸੰਗਿ ਰਾਤਾ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪ੍ਰਤਿਪਾਲੇ ਸੇਵਕ ਸੁਖਦਾਤਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 101*

Like warp and woof the Lord is intertwined with His servant. The comfort-giver Lord cherishes His serf.

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Mind Self/Consciousness/Ego?

(ਮਨ)

Translator's Note :

There is no exact equivalent word in English for the Punjabi word ਮਨ forming the title of this article. Some of the possible equivalents such as mind, soul, conscience, consciousness, psyche or self are approximations rather than exact equivalents. As per Author's definition of this word, "ਮਨ is an extremely minute, abstract entity consisting of the sum total of all human thoughts in their different stage of emergence and intensity." A humble effort has been made to convey the spirit and maximum import of the author's vision about this word in English with as little variations as possible. It is hoped that the discerning English readers will realize the translator's difficulty and fill up the gaps through their enlightened imagination.

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The word ਮਨ of the Punjabi script has been widely used in many religious scriptures, especially in the *Gurbani*/text of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib*. So much stress has been laid on this word that it is very essential for a seeker of truth to understand its correct meaning. I have tried to seek its meaning from many saints and consulted so many books as well. I deem it my duty to apprise my readers what do I mean by this word? It has been frequently remarked that it is this phenomenon called ਮਨ which separates or alienates man from God. It is this smokescreen that prevents man from being one with God. For this reason, an inquisitive seeker of truth becomes deeply interested in grasping the true identity of this phenomenon. If it is this phenomenon which alienates man from God, then man must study this phenomenon, and after understanding it thoroughly, he must obliterate its interference in his pursuit of the Divine. But what this phenomenon actually is? How should man understand it? How should man obliterate its interference after comprehending its mode of operation? These are some of the obstacles or road blocks which obscure and obstruct the

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spiritual quest of a spiritual seeker. Since there are very few and rare enlightened individuals who know the true import of this phenomenon, so the spiritual quest of many spiritual devotees remains incomplete and unrealized due to their lack of understanding this phenomenon and its obliteration. I venture to write this article for these seekers of truth so that they clearly understand the complete meaning of this phenomenon and after comprehending its true import may reach their final destination of being one with the Divine.

It is widely believed that man's brain in the human skull or what we call mind is meant by this phenomenon called ਮਨ. Majority of the educated and literate people call it mind or brain. But in the religious scriptures, especially in Sri *Guru Granth Sahib*, human brain or mind does not stand for this phenomenon. Rather, it has been referred to as something more minute and more lasting than this biological organ called the brain or mind. When a man dies or when his physical body stops functioning, his brain organ remains intact inside his dead body, though it can no longer do any thinking. As some other body

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organs such as human eyes, hands, feet, heart, lungs remain intact even after death of a human body, similarly human brain or mind also remains intact though it can no longer do any thinking. But this mysterious phenomenon called ਮਨ continues to exist or survive even after the physical death of a human body. It has been held responsible for the several births and deaths that a human being undergoes through. Therefore, the scriptures do not refer to human brain while addressing this human faculty or phenomenon called ਮਨ. It is a faculty or a phenomenon which is far more minute and abstract entity than the solid bodily organ called brain or mind.

Then does this faculty stand for the capacity to think? In this context, it is also essential to understand that human organ 'eye' and capacity to see are two different phenomena. Very often, a dead body's eyes are open, but they cannot see. Similarly, brain/mind and capacity to think are also distinct things. Human brain is incapable to think without the capacity or power to think. Now an other question arises. If human brain cannot think without the power or capacity to think, can brain power do some thinking without the brain?

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By the same analogy, if a human eye is ineffective without the power to see, can power of eyesight see without the human eye? Scriptures say that an other human entity which is very very minute and abstract human entity creates another world of its own. This minute, abstract human entity continues to remain intact and alive during sleep as well as death of a physical human body. It is, therefore, not necessary for this minute, abstract entity for its functioning to possess a solid biological or physical brain. It continues to exist and operate even after the death or non-existence of the brain. This, mysterious human entity, in itself, is not 'The Thinking Power', but 'Capacity to Think' is one of the attributes which continues to exist and survive even after the death of the physical body. Now, even if we accept that capacity to think is one of the attributes of this minute, abstract human entity called (ਮਨ), even then it does not provide us the answer to our real problem - the problem to know what this abovementioned entity actually is? Unless we know what does it actually mean, till then we cannot understand its true identity. Unless we understand its identity thoroughly, we cannot

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overpower it, and unless we overpower it, we cannot be one with the Divine. The *Gurbani*'s edict "ਮਨ ਜੀਤੇ ਜਗਜੀਤ" (victory over the mind-self is victory over the world) is the goal of our life. But can we overpower an enemy whom we are not able to identify?

From the above discussion, we have learnt that our minute, abstract entity called ਮਨ is neither our brain nor any solid, tangible object. It is an extremely minute invisible entity which remains with us even after death of our physical body. Capacity to think and cogitate is one of its qualities or attributes, but this attribute is not to be confused with the whole of which it is a part or aspect. Power to think originates from it, but it itself does not originate from the power of thinking.

Then what is it which we call ਮਨ?

or

What is this Minute or Abstract Phenomenon in itself?

A seeker of truth must bear it in mind that *Waheguru* or the Divine is not a power which

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thinks. He is without and beyond the realm of thought. Thinking or thought process is a lower state of being. He alone thinks who is in need of something. A state of being where all kinds of needs, desires and wants cease to exist, there is no scope for any kind of thinking. Therefore, those who comprehend or realize the Divine, they know that there is no need to think about God. He is beyond the realm of human efforts of thinking. *Waheguru* or the Divine does not include the faculty of thought process, let alone the faculty called ਮਨ. *Waheguru* is an entity without a human faculty that craves, desires and needs.

Before I explain the meaning of ਮਨ, let us try to understand what is ਜੀਵ human self? Now that we know that *Waheguru* is without, above and beyond the minute, abstract human entity called ਮਨ, let us try to understand or explore what we are or what is human self. If we find answer to this question, it may become easier for us to understand the reality about that minute, abstract human entity called ਮਨ.

The latest research findings about the identity of the human self say that man or his 'Self' ਜੀਵ

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is an integral part or son of God, but he (man) has forgotten this fact. Because of this lapse or misconception, man or his 'Self' regards himself a limited, inferior being imprisoned in a bodily frame, caught in a vicious cycle of birth and death, destined to go through eighty four lac lives of different species and a helpless being. But this misconception is a sort of smokescreen between the human and the Divine. When this smokescreen is removed through the knowledge of the Divine, then the human self merges into the Divine as easily as a drop of water merges into water or a ray of light merges into light.

Let us now try to understand that unique, minute abstract entity called ਮਨ. The smokescreen that exists between the human self and the Divine and keeps the human alienated from the Divine is human Self's own ignorance about his own real self. Scriptures have termed this ignorance as human ego, ego's shadow, wall of smokescreen of ignorance, illusion, attachments etc. The Punjabi word ਮਨ has been coined to represent this state of human ignorance. Therefore, ਮਨ is nothing but a conglomeration of human ignorance, misconceptions and human weaknesses.

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Therefore, ਮਨ in itself has no identity. Truly, it has no permanent identity like our ignorance. As ignorance, being just lack of awareness, keeps the human self alienated from the Divine for innumerable biological lives, similarly this conglomeration of human ignorance, desires, weaknesses and misconceptions jointly called ਮਨ creates the biggest obstacle between man and the Divine. If human ignorance is synonymous with our psychic cravings called ਮਨ, then knowledge about our ignorance will automatically lead to our knowledge of our psychic entity called ਮਨ. Ignorance stands for human lack of knowledge and awareness about the real source of our origin and creation. It penetrates into our thought process and manifest itself through our thoughts and their expression. Therefore, the sum total of our thoughts is called ignorance or what we term in Punjabi as ਮਨ. When a person says he does not think that the earth is flying in space at a speed of thousands of miles per minute, it actually means that his thinking faculty or thoughts or thought process is unable to understand the facts about earths' flight or even after understanding this phenomenon, he does not believe in it.

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Then, what is ਮਨ in terms of the above definition. ਮਨ is the sum total of our present thoughts. As our thoughts go on changing, our ਮਨ also keeps on changing. Both are never still and stationary. One whose thoughts keep on shifting is called fanciful, unstable or a romantic. One who is steady and steadfast in his thoughts is considered stable and strong.

Despite the study of all other disciplines of science, unless man studies the science of his own self and his soul, his ignorance about his original creator, the Divine, continues to exist. One who begins to become aware about his origin and real originator, his thoughts or thought process also starts getting crystallized and cleansed. All good deeds, acts of welfare of others and acts of sacrifice for the sake of others cleans man's thought process whereas all acts of meanness, selfishness contaminate his thoughts.

What do we mean by the cleansing or contaminating of thoughts or ਮਨ?

Contamination of thoughts or ਮਨ depends upon the frequency of human thoughts. The higher the frequency, the higher the rate of

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contamination. Surface of a water body goes on being disturbed and shaken as wave after wave keeps on forming on its surface due to wind movement. But as the waves start subsiding, the surface of the water goes on becoming still and calm. When the wind movement stops completely, no wave rises on the surface of the water, and the water becomes completely still and placid. Thus, the formation of waves on a water body disturbs it and makes it muddy and unstable, and the nonformation of waves makes it still and placid. Similarly, the greater the rush of thoughts in a human entity, the greater is the degree of restlessness and tension in him. Since the mind of a sinner, an invalid and a man in suffering is riddled with thoughts and fears, he remains restless and tense. Since a virtuous person devoted to the welfare of others remains free from fears and tensions, he remains peaceful and at rest. Contamination of human thought and thought process is due to the multiplicity of thoughts and cleansing of thought process comes through the stillness and ceasation of thoughts.

How can we overpower our thoughts or ਮਨ?

When our thoughts get restructured according

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to *Gurbani*, we start experiencing peace. As we go on experiencing peace, it becomes easier to control our thoughts. As we go on exercising control over our thoughts, our thought process goes on becoming obedient and subservient to ourself. Ultimately, a stage comes when due to this process of prolonged restructuring and cleansing, our thoughts come under the complete control of our realized self. Now no thought can arise without the express wish of the enlightened self. Only that thought arises and arises with that much intensity which the spiritually enriched self permits it to arise at the permitted pitch of intensity. If this divinely integrated self does not wish, then no thought wave can emerge for hours together or for a whole day, and this human self remains suffused in bliss as a result of his unbroken communion with the Divine. This is what is called overpowering one's thoughts or thought process. The ideal goal of human life is to reach that stage of self-realisation through the process of overpowering one's thoughts. This stage of spiritual self-realisation is the state of overpowering the world.

When and How do Human thoughts cease to

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emerge?

When the thoughts and thought process of a *Gurmukh* come under his control, then nothing can happen without his express will. A stage comes during the continuous practice of *Naam Simran* when a *Gurmukh,* willfully switching off his thinking faculty for a long times, remains engrossed in the Divine. Finally, he arrives at a state of complete thoughtlessness and establishes a direct and permanent communion with the Divine. So at this climactic stage of *Naam Simran,* all kinds of thoughts and thought process cease to exist and operate. In other words, the spiritual quest of a *Gurmukh* or seeker of truth is complete and there is nothing more to explore and realize. Since all thoughts get satiated, they lose their steam. Since it is the end of a spiritual voyage, all flights of fancy and desires to explore vanish. A *Gurmukh* or a spiritual devotee becomes one with the Divine and becomes an image and embodiment of the Divine. At the climax of this spiritual quest, all desires and thoughts vanish forever and cease to arise. Prior to this highest state, thoughts, structured and streamlined by *Naam Simran,* keep on leading a *Gurmukh*

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forwards towards this ultimate destination.

Are our thoughts always hostile or antithetical to our interest?

No, our thoughts lead us astray till we are ignorant of our destination. But once we are aware of our destination of seeking a communion and uniting with the Divine, our thoughts after some initial resistance and hostility, start falling in line with our will to achieve our destination. Human thoughts, then, start assisting and supporting a spiritual seeker, as they keep on troubling a person steeped in ignorance and vices.

The moment a spiritual devotee develops an interest in seeking communion with the Divine, then the same thoughts and thinking process becomes a sailing boat for the devotee to sail through the worldly journey of life intact and uncontaminated.

Our thoughts are a metaphorical sailing boat in our life's journey which, if kept straight and in sailing position, can take us to our destination, but can drown and destroy us as well if turned turtle in midstream. The *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru*

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Granth Sahib has mentioned these several stages of our thought process :

ਭੀਤਰਿ ਪੰਚ ਗੁਪਤ ਮਨਿ ਵਾਸੇ ॥
ਥਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਭਵਹਿ ਉਦਾਸੇ ॥
ਮਨੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਦਇਆਲ ਸੇਤੀ ਥਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹੈ ॥
ਲੋਭੀ ਕਪਟੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਾਖੰਡੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਧਿਕ ਲਗੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 359*

The five evil passions dwell concealed within my mind.
They remain not still and wander like a deserter.
My mind remains not tied to the Merciful Master.
The avaricious, deceitful, vicious and hypocritical mind is excessively linked with worldliness.

ਯਹ ਮਨੁ ਨੈਕ ਨ ਕਹਿਓ ਕਰੈ ॥
ਸੀਖ ਸਿਖਾਇ ਰਹਿਓ ਅਪਨੀ ਸੀ ਦੁਰਮਤਿ ਤੇ ਨ ਟਰੈ ॥
ਮਦਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੈ ਭਇਓ ਬਾਵਰੋ ਹਰਿ ਜਸੁ ਨਹਿ ਉਚਰੈ ॥
ਕਰਿ ਪਰਪੰਚੁ ਜਗਤ ਕਉ ਡਹਕੈ ਅਪਨੋ ਉਦਰੁ ਭਰੈ ॥
ਸੁਆਨ ਪੂਛ ਜਿਉ ਹੋਇ ਨ ਸੂਧੋ ਕਹਿਓ ਨ ਕਾਨ ਧਰੈ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਭਜੁ ਰਾਮ ਨਾਮ ਨਿਤ ਜਾ ਤੇ ਕਾਜੁ ਸਰੈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 536

This mind does not a particle of my bidding. On my part I have grown weary of giving instruction to it, but it abstains not from mal-inclinations. Pause.

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By exercising fraud it hoodwinks the world and fills its belly.
Like a dog's tail it becomes not straight and lends not its ear to what I tell it.
Says Nanak, ever utter thou the Lord's Name, wherewith thy affairs shall be adjusted.

ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਕੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਨ ਕਉ ਮਲੁ ਲਾਗੀ
ਕਾਲਾ ਹੋਆ ਸਿਆਹੁ॥
ਖੰਨਲੀ ਧੋਤੀ ਉਜਲੀ ਨ ਹੋਵਈ ਜੇ ਸਉ ਧੋਵਣਿ ਪਾਹੁ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜੀਵਤੁ ਮਰੈ ਉਲਟੀ ਹੋਵੈ ਮਤਿ ਬਦਲਾਹੁ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਮੈਲੁ ਨ ਲਗਈ ਨਾ ਫਿਰਿ ਜੋਨੀ ਪਾਹੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 651

The scum of so many births is attached to this mind and it has become pitch black.
The oilman's rag turns not white by washing, even though it be washed a hundred times.
By Guru's grace, man remains dead in from vices and his nature is altered and turned away from the world.
Nanak, no impurity attaches to him then and he falls not into the womb again.

ਕਹਿ ਕਬੀਰ ਅਬ ਜਾਨਿਆ ॥
ਜਬ ਜਾਨਿਆ ਤਉ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨਿਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 656

Says Kabir, now I know the Lord; when I know Him, then is my mind pleased.

ਇਹੁ ਮਨੂਆ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਦਹਸਿ ਆਵੈ ॥

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ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਠਾਕੀਐ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਤੀ ਘਰਿ ਆਵੈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 426
How can this mind come under control?
By Guru's grace it is restrained, and instructed in Divine Knowledge, only then it returns !:ome.

ਜੋ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਰਹਿ ਆਪਣਾ ਸੇ ਪੁਰਖ ਬੈਰਾਗੀ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 569
They who subdue their mind, they are the men of renunciation and detachment.

ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਜੀਵਤੁ ਮਰੈ ਤਾ ਮਨ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਮਨੁ ਮਾਨੈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 647
If by Guru's grace, man remains dead in life, then his mind becomes content from the mind itself.

ਅਬ ਮਨੁ ਛੂਟਿ ਗਇਆ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਲੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 705
Meeting the society of saints, my mind is, now, emancipated.

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Thought Waves

(ਮਨ ਤ੍ਰੰਗਾਂ)

Playing is the highest form of happiness for a child. The child becomes oblivious even towards his feed, dress, rest and sleep if he gets a variety of toys to play with. He gets completely engrossed in playing with his toys. Children, fond of flying kites, have been observed jumping over walls and rooftops and even hurting themselves. Children, fond of fire-crackers, have been observed burning themselves while lighting those crackers. Even then they do not abandon their fiddling with the explosive crackers. Children regard playing as their goal of life. Not only they play while awake, but keep on dreaming about games even during sleep.

Human beings are similar to children and their thought waves are their toys. What are these

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thoughtwaves. The author asks us to sit aloof for a few minutes and close our eyes. We shall observe that various kinds of thought waves start rising in our mind. Every thought wave projects a mental picture of some kind in our mind. We may start remembering some of our friends. Each friend's memory will produce a visual image of his face, his qualities and all the incidents related to him. Sometime we may start remembering an enemy as well and all the troubles and tensions created by him for us would flit across our mental screen.

Even when our eyes are open, diverse kinds of thought waves would keep rising in our mind and every thought wave projects a visual image or a mental picture in our mind.

Whatever deed we intend to do, its first stimulus arises in our mind in the form of a thought or thought wave. Then it starts taking a concrete shape and gets into its operative part. All human deeds have been born out of human thoughts and their birth in the human mind.

It is man's past time and enjoyment to play with his thought waves. It is impossible to live

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without these. Man feels delighted if the thought waves are good while he feels troubled if these waves are bad.

All kinds of human accomplishments, his philosophy, his discoveries and inventions, his development and success are the products of his thought waves. Man starts behaving angrily and fighting with others if the thoughtwaves arising in his mind are troublesome and inimical in nature. He starts making friends and developing harmonious relationships if the thought waves are of peaceful and benevolent nature. The whole of human creation depends on the kind of their thought waves.

Responsible and sensible parents try to wean away their child from playing with the toys all the time by providing interesting illustrated books and engaging the services of a teacher so that their child may get good education and make a fine career. In the same way, spiritual prophets, saints, Gurus and *Pirs* try to wean away human beings engrossed in the continuously rising thought waves in their minds. These spiritual benefactors adopt various strategies to accomplish this task.

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While sometime they admonish them for their wrong doings, they encourage and inspire them to do good deeds at some other moments. As a child enters into fine career under the guidance of sensible parents, similarly a human being improves and refines his quality of life and becomes an ideal and perfect human being by seeking guidance from the spiritually realized saints and Gurus.

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Profundity Of Human Thought

(ਮਨ ਦਾ ਸਾਗਰ)

When the sea is rough and choppy, when the tidal waves, propelled by high velocity winds, hit the skies, a ship bounces up and down like a ball on the sea's surface. It is tossed up and tumbled down like a toy by the violent sea. In such a rough weather, it appears as if it is the proverbial deluge which would never subside and destroy the ship. The panic-stricken travelers on board the ship start thinking as if it had never been calm and placid.

But a seasoned captain of a ship, a veteran sailor who has weathered many a storm and who is fully conversant with the real nature of the sea, knows that this choppiness of the sea is a temporary phenomenon. After being turbulent for a few days, the tidal waves will ebb and the sea

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would return to its normal permanent position of being calm and placid. He is sure that his ship is bound to complete its voyage and reach its destination safe and sound.

Such an experienced captain also knows that this horrible aspect of the sea constituting tides, storms, high rise waves, is superficial and absurd attribute of the sea induced by external factors. This aspect has no bearing on the basic nature of the sea. He knows that its deep waters, despite being rough and choppy on their surface, are completely calm and quiet at the bottom. These visible turbulent surfacial conditions are only skin deep abrasions on its vast deep body. The main body of the sea remains free from all kinds of turbulence as it has remained unaffected since ages. It remains in an eternal state of placidness despite the turbulence on its surface.

The only difference between turbulence of the sea and disturbance in human mind is in their mode of confrontation with the turbulence.

A captain of the ship, despite his marine expertise cannot checkmate the natural disturbance on the sea. He can only anchor the ship and wait

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for the storm to subside and fade away. But man can willfully checkmate and even counter the mental and emotional turbulence in his life. Any one can learn the technique to combat this inner turmoil. Where as a naval captain and his crew cannot stop the storm and tidal waves and can do nothing except to wait and watch for the tidal wave to ebb, a person, on a spiritual voyage, can overpower all kinds of mental, emotional and psychic turmoils with the therapeutic technique of *Naam Simran* and guide many other fellow spiritual seekers and fellow human beings to learn this technique.

Although man is unable to stop the tidal waves and sea storms, but he can escape their onslaught through the use of submarines and go deep down into the sea where there is no impact of any surfacial turbulence. In the same way, man has invented the technique of introspection, detachment and involvement in *Naam Simran* to escape the damage done by the turmoils created by human emotions and thoughts. This three-in-one devise of willful introspection, detachment and meditation saves a man from the adverse effects of life's ups and downs and provides

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peace and tranquility. Man can reach such a state of perfect equilibrium, peace and bliss through the application of spiritual therapy after which all kinds of thought waves either subside or fail to reach and cause disturbance. It is a state where there is neither any frustration, nor any kind of betrayal nor conceit, tension, affliction, ailment, aging, or death.

It is a life of complete satisfaction and perfection.

ਨਾਨਕ ਥਯਾ ਘਰੁ ਤਹਾਂ ਜਿਥੈ ਮਿਰਤੁ ਨ ਜਨਮੁ ਜਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 44
Nanak has founded his house on that (ground) where there is no death, birth and old age.

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God's Name Is The Antidote To Mental Turbulence

(ਮਨ ਕਾ ਮਾਰਨ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ਹੈ)

According to the teachings of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib,* continuous flow of thought waves in the human mind keeps us alienated from the ever-present *Waheguru* inside our own self. Thoughts of one kind or the other keep us so much occupied that we do not feel any necessity to come out of those thought-created occupations. Even if somebody feels like getting out of their grip, these thought waves do not allow him to walk out. So, man remains a slave of his thought waves day and night. Since man is ignorant about the higher, thought free, state of being, he starts regarding this world-created by human thoughts as his goal of life. He keeps on getting involved in these worldly affairs and becoming possessive

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about these despite facing various kinds of tensions and problems inherent in this kind of life. A slightly deeper analysis of human life will reveal that he spends his whole life by remaining a slave of his feelings and thoughts.

These thought waves, in majority of the cases, try to make a man extrovert. First, the human eyes create and produce images of the external world consisting of interesting and attractive objects such as the sun, the moon, the sky, the stars, the earth and other objects and things such as plains, mountains, oceans, forests, deserts, green orchards, human beings, animals and birds on the earths' surface. Then human ego produces a thought of possessiveness which makes a man think and say that particular country, a nation, a town, a street or a house belongs to him. From the possessiveness of places, it moves to possessiveness of human beings. Man starts thinking and saying that a particular person is his father, his mother, his brother, his sister, his relative and his friend. At a more formidable level of possessiveness, it makes a man or woman possessive about another human being of the

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opposite sex and regarding that human being as his wife or her husband.

A man marries a woman, makes her produce children and remains involved with these offsprings throughout his life. Man remains in the severe grip of his thoughts and thought-created-relationship throughout his human life. He brings up his children, provides them education, arranges employment for them, arranges marriages of his sons, daughters, and his grand children and makes further provisions for their welfare and security. In this way, man remains in the severe grip of these obligations. This conglomeration of thought waves called ਮਨ in *Gurbani* present this model of human involvement as a goal of human life and holds out an assurance that the pursuit of this model would provide happiness to man. Since man's craving for happiness is inherently built in his system, he takes more than one human birth and spends many of his lives in the hope of achieving this happiness.

But after passing through a cycle of various lives based on thought waves and involvement in thought created occupations, man's inner self

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starts doubting the leadership and the model of involvement provided by thought waves or man's -thinking faculty. Now he starts regarding this mode of life (birth, copulation, death and again birth) as a kind of quagmire, a kind of intractable ocean from which he craves to get out. He yearns to get out of this mesh of emotions and thoughts which have failed to provide him happiness despite their promises and assurances. When this yearning takes the shape of a prayer to the Divine to help him to come out of involvement and attachment syndrome, then it is a genuine human appeal to the Divine. He calls out :

ਖਾਤ ਪੀਤ ਖੇਲਤ ਹਸਤ ਭਰਮੇ ਜਨਮ ਅਨੇਕ ॥
ਭਵਜਲ ਤੇ ਕਾਢਹੁ ਪ੍ਰਭੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਤੇਰੀ ਟੇਕ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 261

In eating, drinking, playing and laughing have I wandered in many births.
Take me out of the terrible world-ocean, my Master. Nanak has Thy support alone.

After this, this yearning turned into prayer makes a man seek the assistance and guidance of spiritual saints and Gurus. Then he wishes to become religious and spiritual rather than appearing to be religious.

If such an enlightened person comes to seek

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inspiration and guidance from the *Gurbani* of *Guru Granth Sahib,* a living embodiment of Guru Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh other *Sikh* Gurus, he would surely start experiencing a change, rather a transformation, in his thoughts in a very short time. Such persons are really fortunate and blessed upon whom awareness dawns and who come to seek inspiration and guidance from *Gurbani.*

First of all, *Gurbani* teaches a devotee that complete happiness does not lie in the world of human thoughts or thought waves. Therefore, it is futile to seek happiness from a place or source where it does not exist. A devotee realizes that his pursuit of happiness in the world created by human thoughts has been his greatest mistake. He, further, realizes hat permanent happiness lies not in the material world created by human thought but in the world that lies beyond the world of thought or mental grasp in the world of human soul. After this, he prays to God or *Guru Granth Sahib* in complete humility for a glimpse into the world of the soul. He admits his inability before the Guru that he is unable to see beyond

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the range of his mental faculties. At this, *Gurbani* responds and guides a devotee that the spiritual realm can not be glimpsed through the external eyes and other mental faculties because that realm exists within the human self rather than outside in the physically visible world. *Gurbani* further advises him that he should try to become introspective rather than an extrovert if he is really keen to look into that spiritual realm.

Gurbani of *Guru Granth Sahib* recommends the practice of *Naam Simran* therapy to become introspective. *Naam Simran* makes the ever flickering thought waves still and calm. When the thought process starts getting monitored and streamlined and focussed, then *Gurbani* guides a devotee to see and understand the true nature of the human self. With further doses of *Naam Simran* or meditation, thought waves subside further and get completely stilled. Then a devotee starts realizing and experiencing that his self, which has been riding the thought waves for many lives, is in reality an image and embodiment of the Divine who lives eternally in his self. He realizes that true happiness lies in recognizing and uniting his

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self with the Divine. He has been hankering for happiness in the external world of material objects under the misguidance of his mental thoughts. The Divine, who lives in his inner self or soul is the real resource of happiness. *Gurbani* insists on recognizing, realizing and communicating with his own self.

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥
ਮਨ ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਾਲਿ ਹੈ ਗੁਰਮਤੀ ਰੰਗੁ ਮਾਣੁ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 441

My mind, thou art thee embodiment (image) of Divine light, so know thy source.
O my mind, the reverend Lord is with thee. By Guru's teaching enjoy His love.

When a *Gurmukh* or a spiritual devotee is able to establish a communication with *Waheguru* or the Divine then he stops listening to and being guided by his own thoughts and abandons his dependence on the guidance and opinion of his mental thoughts. Instead, he seeks guidance from the Divine lodged permanently in his own self. He adopts a mode of life based on the teachings of *Gurbani*. He feels astonished that he used to fall a prey to ailments, tensions and death when he was under the guidance of his own thoughts.

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But now after shifting his allegiance to *Waheguru* and seeking guidance from Him through his communication through the channel of *Naam Simran* and prayer, he has become as eternally happy, powerful, fearless, and without malice as *Waheguru* Himself.

As one progresses on the path of *Naam Simran,* his thought waves go on subsiding and getting more feeble. A stage comes when these thoughts disappear altogether and lose their relevance for a spiritual devotee. That is a stage when man's ਮਨ dies altogether. Death of the ਮਨ or a state of complete thoughtlessness provides a permanent union and communion with the Divine. When this layer of thought fullness dividing the human and the Divine disappears for sometime, human self feels pleased and blessed by a glimpse of the Divine. With the complete disappearance of this layer of thoughtfulness through the practice or investment of *Naam Simran,* the union between the human and the Divine is permanent and eternal. A *Gurmukh,* realizing the difference between the two stages of involvement in the world of thoughtfulness and

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the world of complete thoughtlessness, experiences a state of perfect bliss and eternal happiness :

ਸੂਰਜ ਕਿਰਣਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਜਲ ਕਾ ਜਲੁ ਹੂਆ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲੀ ਸੰਪੂਰਨੁ ਥੀਆ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 846

As the ray blends with the Sun and water becomes water, so merges the human light in the Supreme Light and becomes perfect.

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Aim Of *Naam Simran*

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਦਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਨਾ)

Many practitioners of *Naam Simran* begin to regard it as a climax of their *Naam Simran* or meditational experience when they start seeing glimpses of the Divine during their meditation after they have put in a considerable input of *Naam Simran*. Although this climactic stage is excellent and fortunate, but it is wrong to regard it as the highest stage of meditation.

According to the message of *Gurbani* of Sri *Guru Granth Sahib*, the highest ideal of a *Gurmukh* or a spiritual seeker is to unite with the Divine. Therefore, he must always keep this ideal in his mind while passing through the several phases of meditation.

At the climactic level of meditation, a

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devotee's concentration and meditational will becomes so much focussed and powerful that he can prolong the period of his trance or glimpse of the Divine as long as he wishes. During this willful prolongation of this meditative spell, he can visualize the Divine in any form of his own choice. Some devotees start considering this state of *Naam Simran* as the final stage of meditation. But a devotee who still carries on his spiritual voyage by doing *Naam Simran* and praying for a union with the Divine, begins to experience the Divine in His real and true manifestation :

ਜੈਸਾ ਸਾ ਤੈਸਾ ਦ੍ਰਿਸਟਾਇਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 281*

As the Lord is, so does He appear unto him.

ਅਨਭਉ ਅਚਰਜ ਰੂਪੁ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਪੇਖਿਆ
ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਨ ਕਤਹੂ ਜਾਇਆ ਥਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1002*

I have seen the Fear-free Lord of wondrous beauty. Leaving Him my soul now goes nowhere else.

Even at this stage of near perfection, *Naam Simran* activity does not get completed. There still remains a long spiritual space to be covered. Even after having a glimpse of the real manifestation of the Divine, it takes a long period

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of time to fall in love with this image of the Divine. At this stage, a devotee finds a new phase of spiritual experience starting in his spiritual journey. During this next phase, the image of the Divine, already glimpsed and experienced, goes on becoming more fascinating and attractive as one goes on adding more inputs of *Naam Simran*.

In ordinarily life, a person appears to be a stranger during a chance acquaintance or initial introduction. But as our interaction and discourse continues with him, we go on becoming more familiar and intimate with him. After a considerable interaction, he no longer, remains a stranger or an alien. In the same way, a devotee goes on getting more and more familiar and intimate with the Divine during his several phases of *Naam Simran*. A stage comes in this spiritual journey when a devotee develops such an intimate relationship with the Divine that the two are no longer separable :

ਆਤਮੇ ਨੋ ਆਤਮੇ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਤੀਤਿ ਹੋਇ
ਤਾ ਘਰ ਹੀ ਪਰਚਾ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 87

If the individual soul has intimate faith in the Supreme Soul, it shall then obtain Divine

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Knowledge within its home.

It takes quite a long time to develop this bond of intimacy with the Divine. But once this bond is established, a devotee experiences an altogether a new experience of the Divine and the devotee has to work hard to sustain this experience. A devotee has to give up and sacrifice many of his earlier thoughts, opinions and experiences in order to remain in communion with this new identity and image of the Divine which is eternal, unchangeable, immanent and forever nourishing :

ਆਪੈ ਨੋ ਆਪੁ ਖਾਇ ਮਨੁ ਨਿਰਮਲੁ ਹੋਵੈ
ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੀ ਵੀਚਾਰੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 86

Their self eats up its self-conceit and their mind becomes pure by reflecting over Gurbani.

A devotee has to still his mental thoughts completely. If thought waves are not completely silenced or obliterated, then the image of the Divine, instead of being seen or experienced in its true manifestation, gets coloured by one's own subjective mental opinions and fancies. It is, therefore, extremely necessary to suspend and eliminate one's own human thoughts and

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endeavour to see and experience the Divine in its true manifestation as He, in reality, truly is.

During the next phase of spiritual pilgrimage, a devotee has to make efforts to understand the nature and temperamental disposition of the Divine with whom a devotee has already developed a bond of intimacy and togetherness. A newly-wedded wife feels a bit of a distance and a sense of strangeness with her husband, but after spending some time with him, her sense of alienation and initial sense of mental reservation is removed. This is a stage of getting familiar with the nature and temperament of her life partner. After getting completely familiar with his nature and developing a sense of intimacy with him, she tries to adjust and adapt herself with his nature and keep him happy. With these inputs of human understanding and accommodation, she becomes a queen of his heart and even starts ruling over him. Exactly similar are the four stages of *Naam Simran,* and its spiritual journey. In the first phase of *Naam Simran,* to a devotee or a seeker of the Divine or the newly-wedded life partner of the Divine, He appears to be as He is,

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a bit unfamiliar and a stranger. In the second phase of *Naam Simran*, a devotee, if he persists in his pursuits, tries to understand the nature and temperament of the chosen life-partner or the Divine. In the third phase, a devotee, accepting the Divine to be his inseparable life partner and intimate companion, tries to adjust, adapt and accommodate himself with His nature and temperament. In other words, a devotee understands and accepts the Divine will in totality and as it is, is. In the final and fourth phase, he becomes completely worthy of uniting with the Divine and becoming inseparable from Him.

This article has been written for those devotees or practitioners of *Naam Simran* who are progressing at the different levels or phases of *Naam Simran*, starting from the earlier enterants who visualize and experience the Divine according to their own subjective mental projections, to the enlightened, fully realized souls who see and experience the Divine in His true manifestation and acquiesce in His Divine will. It is my humble submission to all such devotees that they should never consider their

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spiritual voyage as complete and their mission achieved, but go on progressing further on their spiritual voyage still cleansing themselves and still polishing whatever little odd rough edges are still left in their spiritually enriched selves.

The final goal of a spiritual devotee is to unite eternally with the eternal Divine and he must always keep this ideal before him during his spiritual voyage :

ਊਦਕ ਸਮੁੰਦ ਸਲਲ ਕੀ ਸਾਖਿਆ ਨਦੀ ਤਰੰਗ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਸੁੰਨਹਿ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਪਵਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਬਹੁਰਿ ਹਮ ਕਾਹੇ ਆਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਆਵਨ ਜਾਨਾ ਹੁਕਮੁ ਤਿਸੈ ਕਾ ਹੁਕਮੈ ਬੂਝਿ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਜਬ ਚੂਕੈ ਪੰਚ ਧਾਤੁ ਕੀ ਰਚਨਾ ਐਸੇ ਭਰਮੁ ਚੁਕਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਦਰਸਨੁ ਛੋਡਿ ਭਏ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਏਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਧਿਆਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਜਿਤ ਹਮ ਲਾਏ ਤਿਤ ਹੀ ਲਾਗੇ ਤੈਸੇ ਕਰਮ ਕਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਜੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੇ ਜਉ ਅਪਨੀ ਤੌ ਗੁਰ ਕੇ ਸਬਦਿ ਸਮਾਵਹਿਗੇ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1103

Like water in the water of the sea and the wave in the stream, I shall merge in the Lord. Meeting with the supreme soul, my soul shall become impartial like the air.
Why shall I come into this world again?
Coming and going is in His will. Realising the Lord's will I shall merge in Him.
When the make of the five elements perishes,

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then I shall merge in God and like this my wandering shall cease.
Forwearing sects I look on all as equal and meditate on the Name alone.
Howsoever I am attached to, that-wise attached am I and similar are the deeds that I do.
When the Reverend Lord bestows His mercy, then merge I in the Guru's word.

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Beyond the Body

(ਸਰੀਰ ਤੋਂ ਪਰ੍ਹੇ)

After crossing the initial impediments and after acquiring the skill of controlling his thought waves, a spiritual devotee, devoted to *Naam Simran*, starts focussing on the inner phenomena going on in his psyche. He realizes that there are two kinds of energy currents flowing simultaneously inside him. One of these currents is running vertically back and forth from the top to the lower parts while the other is flowing from outside to inside and back and forth.

The first kind of energy current is felt as one looks at and observes one's breathing process. One observes, that first the breath of air goes down and then rises up after a moment's stay there. This breathing process keeps on flowing back and forth without a moment's break. A

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spiritual devotee goes on doing *Naam Simran* in synchronization with the rhythm of breathing process. After controlling all his thought waves, he goes on meditating and repeating God's Name with the rise and fall of each breath. After some practice of *Naam Simran* in continuity with one's breathing, one observes that the breathing process slows down as intensity of concentration increases and remains focussed on the Divine for a longer span. One further observes that the longer the span of concentration and focussing and the slower the breathing process, the greater is the sense of bliss and ecstasy. This sense of fulfillment arises out of the communion with the Divine and the resultant sense of bliss and ecstasy. It dawns upon the devotee in the form a spiritual experience. As the breathing process, under the impact of *Naam Simran*, gets slower and slower, the intensity and sense of fulfillment out of the spiritual bliss and ecstasy increases.

The intensity and pitch of this mystical experience gets so intense that a devotee's self gets so much uplifted that it does not wish to go up and down with the breathing process. It wishes to stay still and keep in continuous touch with the

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Divine without depending on the bodily process of breathing. It does not wish to bear even a moment's break in his sense of mystical bliss and ecstasy. As a person, addicted to alcoholic drinks, goes on changing in his moods with the intake of each peg of his drink from being excited, laughing, singing and dancing and ultimately getting completely silent and still, a spiritual devotee, with each spell of *Naam Simran*, goes on becoming calmer and quieter and getting deeper and deeper into his mystical sense of bliss and ecstasy, till he enters into a trance like state of stillness. His breathing process gets slower. But his self, which is focussed and concentrated on the divine through his practice of *Naam Simran*, becomes almost independent of his breathing. Rather, his self resents the slight disturbance caused by his breathing as it disturbs his state of trance.

At this state of communicative relationship, a spiritual devotee becomes conscious of a flow of another energy current. This second current is felt as coming from outside and then going out again. It seems to be loaded with outside influences as it enters and after unloading these inside, going

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out loaded with inside influences. The self focussed on the Divine, has to get rid of this interference of the second energy current as well. The self, after it has experienced the spiritual bliss and ecstasy, wishes to remain hooked to that mystical experience and prolong his trance as much as he can. It has reached a state of perfect communion forever, almost becoming an inseparable part of the Divine. It experiences as if there is nothing else beside his self and the Divine, one inseparable from the other.

When this trance is broken and the self becomes conscious of his body, he starts observing both the currents flowing in his body. But the moment, the self gets uplifted from the body, both the currents get obliterated. At that stage, both the currents lose their relevance as the self, in a trance, becomes, independent of these energy currents. The self, at this stage of perfect communion and union, feels if it has a life of its own which only dwells in the body. Human body, in itself, has no life and body's life or death makes no difference to the self. The self has an independent identity which dwells in the body without belonging to it. Its real belonging is with

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the Divine with whom it is now united.

Thus, feeling itself independent of the body and beyond the body, a spiritual devotee feels extremely fulfilled and liberated from all kinds of bondages acquired over a long cycle of his bodily births and deaths. He feels that his self is a spirit rather than a body and his spirit is not a prisoner of his body. He is completely independent and liberated from all kinds of bondages and united with the Ultimate Source - The Supreme Divine.

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Naam Simran Is A Path Way

(ਸਿਮਰਨ ਇਕ ਸੜਕ ਹੈ)

The whole national highway or grand trunk road connecting the two cities of Delhi and Amritsar is called a road, weather one travels on it to Jalandhar or Delhi. It is called a road even when it is ten steps outside Amritsar or it is ten steps short of Delhi.

The great saints have assigned the name *Naam Simran* to the channel of communication between the human and the Divine. This channel, beginning from the human, reaches upto the Divine. Man, involved in material pursuits and being a victim of desires, stands on the one end of this channel, while on the other end stands the Divine, over and above the dimensions of size, space and all other human attributes. Each segment and section of this arduous and

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cumbersome communicational channel is called *Naam Simran*. As we travel on earth by road, in space by an aeroplane, we travel in spiritual world on the wings of *Naam Simran*. In simple words, *Naam Simran* is a path way, a channel, a technique, an art, and an invention. Through its utilization or application, man can travel from this material, impermanent world to the invisible world of spirituality after crossing through the arduous and undulating valleys and ridges of human life. Finally, he reaches his destination from where he can have a glimpse of the Divine and getting blessed with His grace and becoming an image and embodiment of the Divine.

As a worldly traveller must know the exact geographical location of his destination, similarly, a spiritual pilgrim must be clear about his spiritual destination of his Divine abode. A ship, which is equipped with technically flawless compass and is caliberated correctly, reaches its harbour after crossing through the turbulent, storm-ridden sea. In the same way, a spiritual pilgrim, riding on the wings of *Naam Simran* and caliberating the compass of his psyo-spiritual inclinations towards the Divine destination,

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succeeds in his spiritual voyage.

A person travelling from Amritsar to Delhi and mistaking Jalandhar for Delhi, gets misled and will never reach Delhi. In the same way, a spiritual traveller, if he mistakes the first signpost, after overcoming the initial hurdles, to be his final destination, he gets misguided by his own calculations.

During the initial stages of *Naam Simran*, a *Gursikh* starts concentrating on the *Gurbani* during its recitation and choral singing. He starts learning the technique of controlling his mental thoughts, during the listening of choral recitation of *Gurbani*. But if he regards this initial stage of *Naam Simran* as his final destination, then he is mistaking Jalandhar for Delhi like an ignorant road traveller. We find very rare individuals among thousands of Sikh devotees who do not belong to this category and who do not take the wood for the trees. Reading, reciting and listening to *Gurbani* recitation is not the final destination of *Naam Simran*. It is the first step or stage of *Naam Simran* or meditation. The next stage, *Naam Simran* adopts the practice of meditation or repetition of

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God's Name. Then this verbal repetition becomes silent repetition and meditation. This technique of *Naam Simran* takes a spiritual devotee's consciousness to the spaceless and dimentionless world of the Divine. Once arrived in this spiritual world, the experiential eye of the devotee opens. With this spiritual eye and outlook, a spiritual devotee experiences a world which Guru Arjan Dev Ji has described as follows :

ਦਰਸਨੁ ਦੇਖਿ ਭਈ ਨਿਹਕੇਵਲ ਜਨਮ ਮਰਣ ਦੁਖੁ ਨਾਸਾ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 764

Seeing Thy sight I have become desireless and my pain of birth and death is ended.

Here, a spiritual devotee gets a clear view of his real spiritual treasure and heritage. He realizes that his practice of *Naam Simran* has crowned him as the sovereign of a throne which he is entitled to share with the Divine as well.

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Scriptures And *Naam Simran*

(ਪੁਸਤਕਾਂ ਤੇ ਅਭਿਆਸ)

If a person, desirous of learning the art of swimming, starts reading books on swimming, he can not know how to swim even after reading hundreds of books on swimming. Water will never spare his life from being drowned simply because he has gone through several books on swimming. It is water's nature to drown a person who does not know the art of swimming. Similarly, a man will not learn the art of swimming if lives in the company of swimmers. His association with the swimmers will not enable him to swim on water.

The only benefit of reading books on swimming and keeping the company of swimmers can be that such a person may become interested in learning the technique of swimming

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or become aware of the benefits of swimming for his health. But these actions can not make him a swimmer.

It is essential to practice the art of swimming. He must put off his clothes, lie down on the surface of water in a particular position and move his hands and feet in a particular style. Understanding the nature of water, he must have the guts to lie down upon its surface and make efforts to swim. Occasional diving and drowning into water are also a part of the swimming exercise. One who practices swimming and masters the technique of swimming is able to overpower water. Water, despite being very deep, does not drown such a swimmer and allows him to play and swim on its surface.

It is quite easy to understand the technique of swimming on water. But what do we mean by swimming the ocean of worldly and material life? It means entering and diving into the sea of spirituality and ocean of divinity after stripping oneself of the trappings of material attachments and the resultant thoughtwaves. How can we travel on this pathway? The *Bani* of *Guru Granth*

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Sahib has laid down the roadmap for travelling on this spiritual pathway. Which is that roadmap and pathway? It is the pathway of *Naam Simran* or practice of concentration on God's Name and His attributes. By following this pathway of *Naam Simran,* the human consciousness and self gets a glimpse into the eternal Divine hidden inside his own self after switching off his mind from the mental thoughtwaves. As we see the swimming fish, and small stones and pebbles at the bottom of a crystal clear water of a waterbody, similarly, a mind or consciousness, cleansed of the dross of mental thoughtwaves, observes the presence of the Divine inside his own self or consciousness. When our cleansed consciousness becomes an image and embodiment of the Divine, it amounts to crossing the ocean of material attachments.

ਦੂਰ ਤੇਰਾ ਗਾਉਂ ਔਰ ਥਕੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਪਾਉਂ,
ਰੁਕਨਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਕਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ,
ਚਲਨਾ ਤੇਰੀ ਸ਼ਾਨ।
ਚਲ ਚਲ ਰੇ ਨੌਜਵਾਨ।

"Oh spiritual traveler :
Your destination is far off,
Your feet are tired,

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But you can't afford to stop and rest.
March forward, O, young traveler
March forward, forward, forward."

So it is essential to learn the technique of crossing through this ocean of material attachments.

Those persons who restrict themselves to the mere reading of scriptures or sitting in the company of saints and spiritual people without undertaking the practice of *Naam Simran* themselves, will find themselves still standing on the edge of an ocean of spirituality and Divinity. Why do such people not progress on the pathway of spiritualism? It is because of the difference between the two activities of having a bookish knowledge of the Divine and His attributes and the physical association with the saints and the actual experience of spiritual realization of God. These first two activities can not take the practitioner to his final destination. These activities can, at the most, produce a curiosity about the spiritual path way, describe its benefits, encourage and prod him to take such a spiritual voyage, but the actual voyage can be covered only when one travels on it oneself.

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Like the art of swimming which one learns only through practice, hard work and persistent effort, all arts, including the art of *Naam Simran*, also are learnt through personal practice and perseverance. One can't learn music only through reading books on music or sitting in the company of musicians. Painting and dancing also are learnt through the practice of playing music and dancing on the floor. A hymn in the *Gurbani* composition *"Asa Di War"*, describes the futility of, acquiring a theoretical knowledge of about God without actually dwelling on His sacred name : SHABAD/ WORD.

ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਗਡੀ ਲਦੀਅਹਿ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਭਰੀਅਹਿ ਸਾਥ ॥
ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਬੇੜੀ ਪਾਈਐ ਪੜਿ ਪੜਿ ਗਡੀਅਹਿ ਖਾਤ ॥
ਪੜੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਬਰਸ ਬਰਸ ਪੜੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਮਾਸ ॥
ਪੜੀਐ ਜੇਤੀ ਆਰਜਾ ਪੜੀਅਹਿ ਜੇਤੇ ਸਾਸ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਲੇਖੈ ਇਕ ਗਲ ਹੋਰੁ ਹਉਮੈ ਝਖਣਾ ਝਾਖ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 467

Man may read and study cart-loads of books and he may read and study the entire multitudes of books.
He may read and study books and put them in boats. He may read and study books and fill pits with them.
He may read year upon year and may study for all the months, that there are.

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He may continue reading for his entire life and may study with every breath of his.
Nanak, only one thing, God's Name is of account and all else is but to prate and prattle in pride.

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Naam Simran Along With Breathing

(ਸਵਾਸਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਿਮਰਨ)

There is one problem which practitioners of *Naam Simran* come across in their life. It is a problem concerning the duration of *Naam Simran* and the resultant benefits. So long as, a practitioner of *Naam Simran* remains engrossed in meditation, he continues to experience the celestial bliss and remains untouched by the worldly problems. But after the spell of *Naam Simran* is over, a spiritual devotee returns to his mundane, humdrum life and its attendant worries and problems start dogging him again. The same old tensions, thought waves and various kinds of other problems start bombarding his mind. Even after spending a sizeable part of one's life on *Naam Simran*, a spiritual devotee's mind is not

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relieved of worldly tensions and it continues to waver and getting contaminated with several kinds of temptations.

What is the solution to this problem? If we accept that a spiritual devotee should all the time remain engrossed in *Naam Simran,* it is not possible for a family man and a man of the world to devote so much time to *Naam Simran*. Even if one is fortunate enough to devote so much time to *Naam Simran,* human body has its limitations so far as this meditational practice is concerned. It gets physically tired after doing *Naam Simran* for one or two hours. As a swimmer gets tired after swimming for a few hours, similarly practitioners of *Naam Simran* also get tired after a few hours of meditation.

As per *Sri Guru Granth Sahib's* teachings, a spiritual devotee or a *Gursikh* should acquire the habit of doing *Naam Simran* all the twenty four hours of day and night in his life :

ਉਠਤ ਬੈਠਤ ਸੋਵਤ ਜਾਗਤ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਤੁਝਹਿ ਚਿਤਾਰੈ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 820

Standing, sitting, sleeping and waking, this soul contemplates Thee, O Lord.

ਦਿਨੁ ਰਾਤੀ ਆਰਾਧਹੁ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਨਿਮਖ ਨ ਕੀਜੈ ਢੀਲਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 498

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My dear, remember thou the Lord, day and night and make not a moment's delay.

Although *Gurbani* exhorts devotees to do *Naam Simran* day and night round the clock, they come across the following problems during the spiritual pursuits of *Naam Simran* :

First problem : Human body gets tired after some time during *Naam Simran.*

Second problem : Human mind can not remain engrossed in *Naam Simran* round the clock. It gets fed up with meditation.

Third problem : It is difficult for a family man or a man of the world to devote so much time to *Naam Simran.*

So, how should a *Gurmukh* devote himself to *Naam Simran* in the presence of these problems and obstacles? *Gurbani* states that *Gurmukhs* remain awake day and night and remain engrossed in *Naam Simran.* Then, how can a *Gurmukh* achieve hundred percent success in meditation and be united with the Divine, and become an integral part of the Divine?

Let us explore and search for the means and

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techniques in *Gurbani* to overcome these problems in the spiritual pursuits of *Naam Simran*. *Gurbani* indicates and points to the technique of meditating or doing *Naam Simran* along with the process of breathing in order to carry on this meditational activity round the clock :

ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਅਰਾਧਿ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਲਹਿ ਜਾਇ ਮਨ ਕੀ ਚਿੰਦ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 501

By remembering the Lord God, with every breath, mind's anxiety is removed.

ਰੈਣਿ ਦਿਨਸੁ ਕਰ ਜੋੜਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਸਾਸਿ ਧਿਆਈਐ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 520

With clasped hands, night and day, remember Him with every breath of thine.

ਕਿਆ ਸਵਣਾ ਕਿਆ ਜਾਗਣਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਤੇ ਪਰਵਾਣੁ ॥
ਜਿਨਾ ਸਾਸਿ ਗਿਰਾਸਿ ਨ ਵਿਸਰੈ ਸੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਪੁਰਖ ਪਰਧਾਨ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 313

What is sleeping and what is waking? Those turned Guru-wards, they are approved, if, They, who with every breath and morsel forget not the Lord.
They are the perfect and distinguished persons.

By adopting the technique and practice of doing *Naam Simran* along with breathing, one overcomes the problem of physical fatigue

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experienced during meditation. Breathing process in the human system continues round the clock without causing any exertion or fatigue to the human body. So one who learns the technique of meditating, simultaneously with breathing, he acquires the habit of doing *Naam Simran* round the clock without getting tired or fatigued physically. It is human effort and consumption of energy which exhausts the human body. But when one acquires the habit of breathing and doing *Naam Simran* simultaneously, it becomes an effortless activity. Then, meditation or *Naam Simran* activity carries on as automatically as the human process of breathing. This joint activity involves no human effort as it becomes as natural a process as the process of breathing.

Some devoties will find it difficult to combine *Naam Simran* activity with their process of breathing in the initial stages. But with a continuous and persistent practice, they will acquire this technique and the problem of physical fatigue during *Naam Simran* will cease to exist. They will experience that they will remain engrossed in *Naam Simran* while sitting, standing or walking as they have mastered the art of

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breathing and meditating simultaneously without any conscious effort.

The second problem that spiritual devotees come across is that they cannot remain engrossed in *Naam Simran* round the clock since their minds get fed up with the same activity. Deep analysis of this problem will reveal that human mind gets fed up with an activity when it either gets exhausted physically or ceases to find enjoyment in that activity and starts feeling that some other activity or pursuit may provide him greater enjoyment. It is a tendency of the human mind that it craves for a variety of enjoyments. After enjoying the culinary pleasures enjoyed through the tastes of its tongue, it starts craving for pleasures of audial pleasures enjoyed through its ears. But when a spiritual devotee starts experiencing the supreme spiritual pleasure of celestial or Divine bliss and gets relieved of physical exertion, then he gets so much engrossed in this blissful pleasure that he stops craving for all kinds of sensual pleasures. He finds complete fulfillment and bliss in the spiritual experience of round the clock pleasure of *Naam Simran* going on simultaneously along with his breathing. This

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involvement in *Naam Simran* or meditation increases to such an extent that hours spent in meditation appear to be without any burden or cumbersomeness. Such a state of spiritual bliss should be the destination of all the spiritual devotees following the path of *Naam Simran*.

But this state of *Naam Simran*, which provides a round the clock sense of bliss and happiness and provides an endless craving for doing more and more *Naam Simran*, is achieved by spiritual devotees after spending a life time of meditational practice and earnest prayers. Spiritual devotees must cultivate and inculcate the art of simultaneous breathing and meditating prior to the achievement of this supreme state of experiencing spiritual bliss through *Naam Simran*.

The practice of *Naam Simran* through verbal repetition with the help of telling the beads of a rosary is more prevalent among the followers of *Naamdhari* sect. But these spiritual followers, who wish to achieve the perfect state of spiritual bliss, should adopt the technique of simultaneous breathing and meditation. Although, the author differs with the followers of the *Naamdhari* sect on the issue of their ideological approach towards

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the Sikh Gurus, but he loves and venerates them extremely because they have shown a greater commitment and devotion towards the ideals of *Naam Simran* and Guru's teachings as enshrined in the *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*.

The third problem in the way of carrying on round the clock *Naam Simran* is that the people are so busy in their worldly affairs that they can not afford to devote so much time to do *Naam Simran*. However, it is a considered opinion of the author that if a *Gursikh* starts devoting some part of his daily routine to *Naam Simran* along with humble, earnest prayers, he would start devoting more time to this spiritual activity as he progresses on this spiritual pursuit and experiences glimpse of spiritual bliss. An automatic change in his business schedule, service, conditions and worldly affairs starts taking place so that he gets more time for his pursuit of *Naam Simran*. If such a *Gursikh* keeps on utilizing this extra available time for *Naam Simran* and along with it he keeps on praying earnestly to the Divine to get him relieved from the excessive involvement in mundane affairs and involve him more in meditation and service of humanity, then

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there are bound to take place more revolutionary changes in his life after spending a sizeable amount of time in meditation. With this changed lifestyle, he will completely get rid of all worldly concerns and get engrossed in *Naam Simran* round the clock. The author has been experiencing all these changes taking place in his personal life. Prayer is a very powerful tool in human life which leads to the fulfillment of *Gursikh's* cherished desires.

Although the author has not achieved the state of doing round the clock *Naam Simran* yet in his life, but his present state of meditation is far more satisfactory and rewarding than his initial stage in this spiritual pursuit. He feels extremely thrilled to realize that it is not impossible for a *Gursikh* to remain occupied with *Naam Simran* round the clock. At this stage, the author does not consider Guru Nanak's alleged engrossment in *Naam Simran* and his spiritual trance for days together a myth. It must have happened with him at the climax of his meditational pursuit. The author feels convinced after his practice and partial success in *Naam Simran* that time is a mental construct. It exists as long as man remains

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confined to his mental perceptions. But when the self becomes one with the "Word" or *"Shabad"* through *Naam Simran* or the Name of God, then human mental perceptions also dissolve and merge into the Divine. So when the mind stops entertaining and involving itself into thought waves, time also ceases to prevail in its physical dimensions. After this suppression of mind by the soul, human self remains permanently integrated with the Divine beyond the dimensions of time and space. This is what it means by the union of the human soul with the Divine or Truth. Such a union should be the ultimate goal of every *Gurmukh*, as per the teachings and message of the *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. Cultivation of this habit or technique of *Naam Simran* is the most useful pursuit to reach this highest goal of life.

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Those Who Seek Treasure Outside The Human Body Are Ignorant And Disoriented

ਵਿਣੁ ਕਾਇਆ ਜਿ ਹੋਰ ਥੈ ਧਨੁ ਖੋਜਦੇ ਸੇ ਮੂੜ ਬੇਤਾਲੇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 309

They, who search the Lord's riches, outside the body, at any other place, are the foolish devils.

This line occurs in the sacred hymn composed by the third Sikh Guru, Guru Amardas in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. It illustrates that those who seek wealth or divine treasure, they will find it lodged in their own human body. Their efforts are bound to fail and go unrewarded if they try to seek this treasure anywhere outside their human body. As a person ignorant of rhythm or symphony cannot become a musician and remains ignorant of musical compositions, similarly those who seek treasure outside their human body can never claim themselves to be wealthy.

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The word 'Treasure" in this line of *Gurbani* does not connote "Spiritual treasure" alone but all kinds of wealth. Had it been a reference to one kind of "treasure" only, the Guru would have clearly stated it there. So here the word "treasure" refers to every kind of treasure or wealth. It is illustrated through the following hymn from the text of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* :

ਸਭ ਕਿਛੁ ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਬਾਹਰਿ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਟੋਲੈ ਸੋ ਭਰਮਿ ਭੁਲਾਹੀ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 102*

Everything is within the home, not even one is without.
He, who seeks without is lost in doubt.

According to the spiritual experience of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji, all kinds of wealth and happiness are present in the human body. It is a mistake and wastage of time to seek happiness or other kind of treasure anywhere else other than the human body :

ਮਨ ਮੇਰਿਆ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਤੇਰੈ ਨਿਧਾਨੁ ਹੈ
ਬਾਹਰਿ ਵਸਤੁ ਨ ਭਾਲਿ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 569*

O my mind, within thee is the treasure; search thou not the thing without.

According to Guru Amardass, there lies a great treasure in the human body. It is futile to

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search for any kind of treasure outside one's own body as it does not exist anywhere else.

Moreover, treasure or wealth, in itself, has no value or significance. It is considered significant because it is a medium of exchange for acquiring comforts, and conveniences for us. Why are silver, gold or diamonds so valuable? It is because we can buy other comforts anytime we want by using these as medium of exchange. We can buy foodstuff, clothes, residential houses, automobiles and other means of entertainment and recreation by bartering away silver and gold etc. and derive pleasure form these purchased articles of human consumption. Had these articles of silver, gold or diamonds no value of exchange, these would have been considered as ordinary articles as pieces of wood, stone and bricks. So what must be understood clearly is that man wants happiness and comfort. Since money, wealth or any other form of treasure helps man to acquire comfort, man loves and likes money, diamonds and rubies. He amasses wealth with hard work and keeps it safe and secure in his possession. These are valuable because these assets can be exchanged and can bring about comfort whenever

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it is required.

So, wherever the text of *Guru Granth Sahib* refers to such a treasure as always present in the human body, it implies that all the techniques and methodologies of acquiring wealth lie inside the human system. If a person discovers those techniques and then starts applying those techniques after discovering these, then all kinds of comforts, material as well as spiritual, would become available to him. As a small key becomes instrumental in opening a big padlock locking a strong steel chest containing a huge treasure, and enables us to open the door and take possession of the huge treasure, there is similar key which can open the hidden treasure lying inside our body and enable us to achieve all kinds of material and spiritual pleasures.

So following the *Gurbani* teachings, when we begin the search for such a treasure in our body, which is capable of providing us with all the material and spiritual comforts, we shall observe that we do not find anything else beside bones, and blood vessels inside our body. We can find the answer to this problem in the *Gurbani* of *Sri*

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Guru Granth Sahib. This answer is recorded in the *Gurbani* for the guidance of an inquisitive and persevering *Gursikh*. *Gurbani* states :

ਤਨ ਮਹਿ ਮਨੂਆ ਮਨ ਮਹਿ ਸਾਚਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 686*
The mind is in the body and in the mind is the True One.

A devotee or spiritual seeker will find that our body contains another element other than the blood and bones. That element is called ਮਨ (call it mind, being, psyche, self or soul) [The author's definition of it is that it is a sum total of mental thoughts]. The true Lord resides in this part of the body. And who is this true Lord? The *Gurbani* states :

ਤਿਸੁ ਸਾਹਿਬ ਕੀ ਟੇਕ ਨਾਨਕ ਮਨੈ ਮਾਹਿ ॥
ਜਿਸੁ ਸਿਮਰਤ ਸੁਖੁ ਹੋਇ ਸਗਲੇ ਦੂਖ ਜਾਹਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 517
In his mind, Nanak has the mainstay of the Lord, by remembering whom, peace is obtained and all the troubles vanish.

In other words : "I have taken the shelter under that Lord who resides in my own Being. By keeping a remembrance of that Lord, all kinds of comforts and happiness are born and all kinds of suffering gets eliminated." A devout *Gursikh* seeker realizes that the search for a treasure inside

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the human body actually means a search for the Lord residing inside the body. Once the Lord is located through *Naam Simran* and one's Being is tuned to His Divine will, all kinds of treasure, comforts and happiness become available and all kinds of suffering disappear from his body.

Now, the next problem arises as to how to discover or locate the true Lord inside one's Being? Does the *Gurbani* provide any kind of guidance in this search? Yes, it does indeed. But it guides only those *Gursikhs*, who are keen researchers, hard-working or industrious and humble. *Gurbani* states :

ਭੀਤਰਿ ਪੰਚ ਗੁਪਤ ਮਨਿ ਵਾਸੇ ॥
ਥਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹਹਿ ਜੈਸੇ ਭਵਹਿ ਉਦਾਸੇ ॥
ਮਨੁ ਮੇਰਾ ਦਇਆਲ ਸੇਤੀ ਥਿਰੁ ਨ ਰਹੈ ॥
ਲੋਭੀ ਕਪਟੀ ਪਾਪੀ ਪਾਖੰਡੀ ਮਾਇਆ ਅਧਿਕ ਲਗੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 359*

The five evil passions dwell concealed within my mind.
They remain not still and wander like a deserter.
My mind remains not tied to the Merciful Master.
The avaricious, deceitful, vicious and hypocritical mind is excessively linked with

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worldliness.

A *Gursikh* seeker already knows that there is another invisible/being/self/soul (ਮਨ) inside the body and inside that Being there resides the Lord. But *Gurbani* also informs a *Gursikh* that besides the presence of the Divine Lord in the human body and Being, there are five inbuilt obstacles as well, in the same system which obstruct the seeker during his search or spiritual journey upto the Divine Lord. These five obstacles have been identified as lust, anger/wrath, avarice, attachment and pride/ego. These obstacles keep the human mind occupied or entangled in such a way that man finds no time to undertake the search for the Divine. The mental thoughtwaves of diverse kinds pertaining to these five kinds of forces or urges keep on emerging on the mental horizon at all moments. These do not allow the human mind to concentrate on the Divine. So what is the solution to solve this problem of lack of concentration or multiplicity of thoughtwaves? Again, *Gurbani* provides us guidance to find a solution :

ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁਆ ਕਿਉ ਕਰਿ ਵਸਿ ਆਵੈ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਪਰਸਾਦੀ ਠਾਕੀਐ ਗਿਆਨ ਮਤੀ ਘਰਿ ਆਵੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 426*

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How can this mind come under control?
By Guru's grace it is restrained, and instructed in Divine Knowledge it returns home.

ਗੁਰਮਤਿ ਮਨੁ ਠਹਰਾਈਐ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੁੜੀਏ
ਅਨਤ ਨ ਕਾਹੂ ਡੋਲੇ ਰਾਮ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 538*

O my soul, By Guru's instruction hold thy mind and it shall not wander to any other place again.

The mental waves arising and emerging on the mental horizon and their visual manifestations keep the mind occupied continuously and never allow it to concentrate on the Divine. *Gurbani* provides a solution to check this continuous flickering of the human mind. A humble, devout *Gursikh* persuades his mind through the above mentioned Guru's teachings to become still and concentrate. Guru's or *Gurbani's* teaching provides knowledge and guidance. This spiritual knowledge makes it clear to the devotee that he need not run after his own mental thoughts and waves to find happiness. It tells him to make his mind still and observe and locate the true Divine Lord residing in his own Being and establish a communication with Him. It will bring about a revolution in his own being. All kinds of comforts

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and happiness will be at his disposal and become available at his beckoning. *Gurbani* states it categorically :

ਮਾਇਆ ਦਾਸੀ ਭਗਤਾ ਕੀ ਕਾਰ ਕਮਾਵੈ ॥
ਚਰਣੀ ਲਾਗੈ ਤਾ ਮਹਲੁ ਪਾਵੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 231*

Mammon is the hand-maid of God's devotees, and performs their service.
If man falls at their feet, then, does he attain to Master's Mansion.

ਨਾਨਕ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਿਨੀ ਆਰਾਧਿਆ
ਅਨਦਿਨੁ ਹਰਿ ਲਿਵ ਤਾਰ ॥
ਮਾਇਆ ਬੰਦੀ ਖਸਮ ਕੀ ਤਿਨ ਅਗੈ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਕਾਰ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 90*

Nanak, they, who meditate on God's Name, night and day, abide in the Lord's constant love.
The mammon, the maid-servant of the Master performs service before them.

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A Poser?

(ਇੱਕ ਸਵਾਲ?)

What would be our opinion about a person who claims that, despite his birth in the family of a sweet vender, he is ignorant about the taste of sweets or about a person who claims that, despite his birth in the family of a distiller of perfumes, he does not know that taste of a perfume? A sensible person would like to go deep into the facts before making an off-the-cuff remark or replying to this query. He may learn that a person, despite his birth in the family of a sweet seller, may not be in the sweetmeats business. But people may be calling him a sweet seller just because of his birth in the family of sweet sellers. Similarly, a son of perfume distiller may not be in the perfume business despite his birth in such a family, and still may be called a perfume seller.

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In both these cases, sweet seller's son or perfume maker's son may claim to be ignorant about the taste of sweets or perfumes, but what would be other people's opinion about these two persons who have been born and brought up in such a family environment where there is a round the clock preparation and fragrance of sweets and perfumes?

By the same analogy, what will be our opinion about a person who claims himself to be the son of Guru Nanak and claims to be born in an environment and ethos of *Gurmat* values but who is ignorant about *Naam Simran* and devotes no time to the activity of *Naam Simran*? *Naam Simran* is the greatest asset and the greatest blessing in the House of Nanak. *Gurbani* declares:

> ***ਨਾਨਕ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮੁ ॥*** ***ਅੰਗ - 1136***
> ***The Lord has given Nanak the gift of this game, that in his home resounds only the Name Divine.***

There is nothing else beside the *Naam* or *Naam Simran* in the House of Nanak. If, at all, there is any other asset, it is an automatic meditation of *Naam Simran*. As sun's energy nourishes and produces every kinds of life,

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foodgrains, flowers and fruits, similarly all kinds comforts and happiness are born of *Naam* or *Naam Simran*. It is for this reason, the entire Sikh community prays for the blessings of *Gurmat*, faith and trust in the Divine, life based on Sikh code of conduct, sense of discrimination and knowledge and above all the blessing of *Naam Simran*. God's *Naam* is the source of all other boons and blessings. Where there is God's *Naam* and meditation of *Naam* or *Naam Simran*, there are all the boons and blessings of life based on *Gurmat*, faith, sacrifice, fearlessness, health and happiness of both body and mind, prosperity and absence of malice. Wherever Lord's Name is meditated upon, the Divine Lord Himself arrives and resides forever and all kinds of comforts and happiness come in its train :

ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਿਨਿ ਠਾਕੁਰੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਤਿਸ ਕੇ ਗ੍ਰਿਹ ਮਹਿ ਆਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 715

Says Nanak, the man who has attained to his Lord, gathers everything in his home.

There is only one pathway in the *Gursikh* way of life to invoke the blessings of God and ensure his permanent blessings. That singular way is the way of *Naam Simran*.

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If we make a survey of the way of life of the *Sikhs* in the modern age, we shall observe that if the Sikhs have completely obliterated any one of the best teachings of Sikhism, it is that of *Naam Simran* and its practice.

Although the invention of the theory of *Naam Simran* was invented by ancient Indian sages as mentioned in the following *Gurbani* lines :

ਸਿਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਬੇਦ ਪੁਰਾਣ ਪੁਕਾਰਨਿ ਪੋਥੀਆ ॥
ਨਾਮ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਭਿ ਕੂੜ ਗਾਲ੍ਹੀ ਹੋਛੀਆ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 761*

The Smirtis, the Vedas, the Puranas and other Religious Books proclaim, that without the Name all other things are false and worthless.

But this theory and practice of *Naam Simran* has not only been revived but perfected as well by Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak spent whole of his life for the propagation of *Naam Simran*. Each and every line of *Gurbani* text lays stress on the need to do *Naam Simran*. The disappearance of this greatest and the most important practice of *Naam Simran* from the Sikh way of life is the root cause of all the problems confronting the Sikhs in modern times as well a potential reason for the emergence of similar problems in the near future.

Guru Nanak can never take pride in the

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increased numerical strength of the Sikhs, their economic and purchasing power; what can be matter of pride for him will be the rich spiritual life of his devotees. Guru Nanak may not be interested and may not appreciate the ostentatious celebration of his birthdays or the amount of money that is offered in the Sikh temples on these occasions. He would be more interested and appreciate when he finds that most of his Sikh devotees practise *Naam Simran* and lead a higher spiritual life.

This kind of dichotomy of claiming oneself to be a Sikh and yet living a life without practicing *Naam Simran* tantamounts to be the son of a sweet seller without knowing the taste of sweets. How shall such people be branded? *Gurbani* brands them as follows :

ਧ੍ਰਿਗੁ ਸੇਜ ਸੁਖਾਲੀ ਕਾਮਣਿ ਮੋਹ ਗੁਬਾਰੁ ॥
ਤਿਨ ਸਫਲੁ ਜਨਮੁ ਜਿਨ ਨਾਮੁ ਅਧਾਰੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 233*

Accursed is the comfortable couch and the darkness is the love for a deserted lady. Fruitful is the birth of those, who have the Name's support.

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Power Of Union (With The Divine) And Its Magnificence

(ਅਭੇਦਤਾ ਦੀ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਨ)

The greatness of saints or saintly persons lies in their union with the Divine. The greater the level of union or communion with the Divine, the greater the spiritual status of a saint; and greater the unity, the greater the reputation and magnificence of a saint.

When a practitioner of *Naam Simran* achieves a union with the Divine, then he loses every kind of desire to pray for or seek any material things. He rather abandons the wish for any material gains as if he realizes that he has received everything :

ਜੋ ਕਿਛੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਾ ਸੋ ਸੇਵਕ ਕਾ
ਸੇਵਕੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਹੀ ਸੰਗਿ ਜਾਹਰੁ ਜੀਉ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 102*

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What belongs to the Lord, that belongs to His page. The page becomes a distinguished person in the association of his Lord.

So long as *Gursikh* prays for any worldly things from the Divine, he is separated from the Divine. Till then his status is that of an electric bulb which has not been connected to the power house of an electric current and switched on. A *Gursikh* keeps on groping in the dark till he has achieved a direct communication of unity with the Divine. A *Gursikh,* united with the Divine spiritually becomes an integral part of the Divine :

ਜਿਸੁ ਨਾਮੁ ਰਿਦੈ ਤਿਸੁ ਕੋਟ ਕਈ ਸੈਨਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1155

He in whose mind the Lord's Name abides; he owns many millions of armies.

Union means to become one with the Divine. When a Sun's ray and the Sun merge in each other, both of these become indistinguishable. Nobody can keep them apart. Similarly, when a *Gursikh,* through the practice of *Naam Simran* becomes one with the Divine, then he finds his mind, his whole being, his outlook take the shape of a Divine inspiration. His outlook and attitude

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becomes spiritual and he starts manifesting all the Divine attributes through his words and deeds. His conduct, his daily way of life, and his deeds start reflecting Divine outlook. There appears an aura of spirituality and Divinity around him :

ਸੰਤਾ ਕਉ ਮਤਿ ਕੋਈ ਨਿੰਦਹੁ ਸੰਤ ਰਾਮੁ ਹੈ ਏਕੁ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 793

Let no one slander the saints. The Lord and the saint are one.

Separated and alienated from the Divine, a *Gursikh* prays for material benefits from the Divine and seeks to become happy through these benefits. But once integrated and united with the Divine, *Gursikh* sheds his own ego and identity and merges it with the Divine, and achieves a sovereignty over every thing that God has bestowed upon him from the very beginning. Such a spiritually realized *Gursikh*, then, becomes a medium of dispensation for the boons and blessings of the Divine.

A *Gurmukh* or practitioner of *Naam Simran* realizes the worth of his own real self for the first time when he achieves a complete union with the

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Divine. He experiences a unique sense of mystical ecstasy when he realizes that he has become an image and embodiment of the Divine. He himself, acquires the Divine power of creation and construction through his own utterances. He finds all those creative and constructive powers of the Divine standing in his attendance and ready to do his bidding. He feels ecstatic and wondrously struck at the manifestation of such a Divine beneficence through his own self.

Prayers, pleadings and appeals for things exist so long as a *Gursikh* considers himself alienated and separated from the Divine from whom he seeks these blessings, or so long as he is ignorant of this true relationship with the Divine. The moment, a *Gursikh* realizes the inalienable and unbroken bond between himself and the Divine, he abandons the path of praying and seeking for all kinds of benefits and material gains. He abandons the struggle for material gains and takes refuge under the benign magnificence and beneficence of the Divine. He achieves a state of spiritual poise at this spiritual stage.

Placing himself in this state of spiritual poise

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and union with the Divine, a *Gursikh* surrenders all his struggle and means of solving his personal problems to the Divine will of God and provides the Divine a chance to deal with those problems. Such a spiritually enlightened and united *Gursikh* does not feel threatened even when attacked from all sides by the evil-doers. Taking shelter behind bedrock of his faith and knowledge of his union with the Divine, he rejoices in the victory of the Divine and stands a witness to such a victory over the evil and evildoers. He calls joyfully :

ਸਤਰੁ ਅਨੇਕ ਚਲਾਵਤ ਘਾਵ
ਤਉ ਤਨ ਏਕ ਨ ਲਾਗਨ ਪਾਵੈ।
Let the enemy attempt to injure me, with innumerable weapons.
My body will remain unscathed
From the fury of their assault.

It is one state of being when a person, considering himself separated from the Divine, prays for His blessings. But it is an entirely different state of being when a persons feels completely united and integrated with the Divine, gets instant fulfillment. His every desire and its instant fulfillment are the two aspects of the same prayer :

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ਜੋ ਜੋ ਚਿਤਵਹਿ ਸਾਧ ਜਨ ਸੋ ਲੇਤਾ ਮਾਨਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 817
What-so-ever the holy men wish for, that the Lord grants them.

ਜੋ ਮਾਗਉ ਸੋਈ ਸੋਈ ਪਾਵਉ ਅਪਨੇ ਖਸਮ ਭਰੋਸਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 619
What-so-ever I ask, that, yea all that I receive, for I have faith in my Master.

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Dasam Dwar And Anhad Shabad Tenth State Of Spiritual Enlighten-ment And Primordial Sound

(ਦਸਮ ਦੁਆਰ ਅਤੇ ਅਨਹਦ ਸ਼ਬਦ)

Some educated persons who do not practise *Naam Simran* are of an opinion that concepts and stages like "The Tenth state of spiritual enlightenment" and the phenomenon of "Unstruck Melodies" have no real existence. Some Sikh gentlemen feel that such states of mind or phenomena may form a part of the Hindu and Yogic religious ideology, but as far as Sikhism is concerned, these phenomena have no relevance. In one of the Sikh congregations, a Sikh leader was heard declaring a person, who claimed to have achieved this tenth state of spiritual enlightenment and who heard those unheard melodies, as a great fraud and a hypocrite. Another educated

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and seemingly religious person remarked that it was better to listen to a musical composition on a radio or tick-tick sound of a wall-clock in one's room than to listen to the so called "'unstruck melodies" in the tenth state of spiritual enlightenment. In his opinion, it was more beneficial to listen to the music on the raido than listening to those vague unstruck melodies. Now when the practice of *Naam Simran* has become almost extinct in the lives of the *Sikhs*, it is not unexpected to come across people having such views. What appears to be strange is that despite this trend, there are a few people who still believe in the authenticity of these spiritual states mentioned in *Gurbani* and believe in the salvation of human soul by having a glimpse of the Divine through the practice of *Naam Simran*.

The tenth stage in our human state is such a state where we enter through the practice of *Naam Simran*. After arriving at such a state, we experience a unique sense of bliss and ecstasy in which we enjoy the music of unstruck melodies. These kinds of melodies cannot be heard in any other state of being except that in this state of bliss, our consciousness listens to these melodies

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emerging from our own soul during the highest stage of *Naam Simran*. These two phenomena of "Tenth State" and "Unheard Melodies" are so tangible and real that no genuine practitioner of *Naam Simran* can deny their existence. There are numerous references to these two spiritual experiences in the text of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*:

ਹਰਿ ਜੀਉ ਗੁਫਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਰਖਿ ਕੈ ਵਾਜਾ ਪਵਣੁ ਵਜਾਇਆ ॥
ਵਜਾਇਆ ਵਾਜਾ ਪਉਣ ਨਉ ਦੁਆਰੇ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਕੀਏ ਦਸਵਾ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਰਖਾਇਆ ॥
ਗੁਰਦੁਆਰੈ ਲਾਇ ਭਾਵਨੀ ਇਕਨਾ ਦਸਵਾ ਦੁਆਰੁ ਦਿਖਾਇਆ ॥
ਤਹ ਅਨੇਕ ਰੂਪ ਨਾਉ ਨਵ ਨਿਧਿ ਤਿਸ ਦਾ ਅੰਤੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਕਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਹਰਿ ਧਿਆਰੈ ਜੀਉ ਗੁਫਾ ਅੰਦਰਿ ਰਖਿ ਕੈ ਵਾਜਾ ਪਵਣੁ ਵਜਾਇਆ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 922

Placing the soul in the body-cave, the Lord began to blow the musical instrument of breath into it.
He blew the musical instrument of breath, made the nine doors manifest and the tenth He has kept concealed.
Through the Guru, blessing some with faith, He shows the tenth gate.
The Lord of manifold forms and the Name's nine treasures are there. His limit can be found not.
Says Nanak, putting the soul in the body-cave,

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the beloved Lord has blown the breath in it as a musical instrument.

ਨਉ ਦਰਵਾਜੇ ਕਾਇਆ ਕੋਟੁ ਹੈ ਦਸਵੈ ਗੁਪਤੁ ਰਖੀਜੈ ॥
ਬਜਰ ਕਪਾਟ ਨ ਖੁਲਨੀ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਖੁਲੀਜੈ ॥
ਅਨਹਦ ਵਾਜੇ ਧੁਨਿ ਵਜਦੇ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦਿ ਸੁਣੀਜੈ ॥
ਤਿਤੁ ਘਟ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਚਾਨਣਾ ਕਰਿ ਭਗਤਿ ਮਿਲੀਜੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 954*

The body fortress has nine doors. The tenth is kept unseen.
The adamantine shutters of the tenth gate open not. Through the Guru's word alone they get opened.
The melodious celestial strain rings there. By the Guru's word it is heard.
The Divine light shines in the mind of those who hear the music of the tenth gate. Such persons meet God, by embracing meditation.

ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਰਸੁ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਚੁਆਇਆ ॥
ਦਸਵੈ ਦੁਆਰਿ ਪ੍ਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ਆਇਆ ॥
ਤਹ ਅਨਹਦ ਸਬਦ ਵਜਹਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਬਾਣੀ ਸਹਜੇ ਸਹਜਿ ਸਮਾਣੀ ਹੇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1069

The True Guru has dropped the Immortalising Nectar into my mouth.
Where as the Lord became manifest within my tenth gate.
There, in the tenth gate, resounds the celestial

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strain of the utterance of the Guru's word and one easily merges in the Lord.

While some *Gursikhs* deny the efficacy of *Naam Simran* and regard existence of "Tenth State" and "Unstruck Melodies", as an illusion, other *Gursikhs* who are regular practitioners of *Naam Simran* regard these two phenomena as the ultimate stage of *Naam Simran*. Both categories of these *Gursikhs* are wide off the mark. Where as it is an acknowledged fact that arriving at the "Tenth State" and listening to the "Unstruck Melodies" through *Naam Simran* is a valid experience, but it is wrong to assume that this spiritual state is the ultimate and the highest state or destination of a spiritual voyage.

According to the philosophy and teachings of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*, the final destination of a *Gursikh* is to have a glimpse of the Divine, understanding of the Divine Will, praising of the Divine attributes and becoming an image and embodiment of the Divine and uniting with the Divine. So those who regard the "Tenth State" of "Unstruck Melodies" as the final stage do not understand the philosophy and teachings of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib*. It is an undoubted fact that

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one arrives at such a state during *Naam Simran* and it is one of the authentic signs of spiritual meditation, but it is not the ultimate stage of *Naam Simran*. The final stage of *Naam Simran* is one where a devotee discovers the Divine in his own self and unites with Him forever, after becoming an image and embodiment of the Divine :

ਭਈ ਪਰਾਪਤਿ ਮਾਨੁਖ ਦੇਹੁਰੀਆ ॥
ਗੋਬਿੰਦ ਮਿਲਣ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਰੀਆ ॥
ਅਵਰਿ ਕਾਜ ਤੇਰੈ ਕਿਤੈ ਨ ਕਾਮ ॥
ਮਿਲੁ ਸਾਧਸੰਗਤਿ ਭਜੁ ਕੇਵਲ ਨਾਮ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਸਰੰਜਾਮਿ ਲਾਗੁ ਭਵਜਲ ਤਰਨ ਕੈ ॥
ਜਨਮੁ ਬ੍ਰਿਥਾ ਜਾਤ ਰੰਗਿ ਮਾਇਆ ਕੈ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 12*

This human body has come to thy hand.
This is thy chance to meet the Lord of the world.

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Guru-wards Seek Salvation Through Naam Simran

(ਹਰਿ ਜਪਿ ਜੀਅਰੇ ਛੁਟੀਐ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਚੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ)

There comes a stage during the practice of *Naam Simran* where a devotee's mind becomes still after getting rid of all mental thoughts and their visual reflections or images. During this still state of mind, a devotee experiences peace and bliss.

There are so many saints, spiritually great individuals and *Gurmukhs* who have experienced this state of spiritual bliss. In which direction should a spiritual devotee proceed after arriving at such a stage? Some of these spiritual devotees do not know how to proceed further. The author has been receiving quite a number of letters from spiritual seekers, and coming across so many other spiritual devotees who keep on making

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enquiries about the higher stages of *Naam Simran*. They acknowledge that they have been doing *Naam Simran* for so many years and have also experienced a sense of bliss during meditation, but they have neither been able to understand the Divine identity thoroughly nor had they ever had a glimpse of the Divine. The present article has been written for the benefit and guidance of this category of spiritual devotees.

When a practitioner of *Naam Simran* arrives at a stage where all his mental thought waves stop rising and his mind becomes still and silent, then whatever image of the Divine, be it the image of Guru Gobind Singh or any other prophet, whose glimpse he wishes to have, gets animated before him. In this state, if a devotee desires to see light, it will instantly appear before him with the brilliance of the sun without its scorching heat. Some practitioners of *Naam Simran* start regarding this stage as the ultimate state of meditation. But it is their illusion or lack of perception. The appearance or materialization of the images of Sikh Gurus or any other prophet or the image of the Divine in the form of a splendid brilliance of the sun is still rooted in the human desire. The

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concentrated and focussed mind of a spiritual practitioner becomes so powerful and charged that his every desire or dream gets materialized. Although this is also a highly superior spiritual state and a unique achievement of mental concentration, but it is still not a state of human union with the Divine.

The real achievement in spiritual meditation according to *Gurmat* or Sikh philosophy is the experience of the Divine and a thorough knowledge of the Divine attributes. The Divine is beyond the limitations and dimensions of shape or colour. It has no particular identity or bodily identification, but one can observe His presence through the experiential eyes :

ਅਦਿਸਟੁ ਅਗੋਚਰੁ ਅਲਖੁ ਨਿਰੰਜਨੁ
ਸੋ ਦੇਖਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਆਖੀ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 87*

Through the guru, he beholds with his eyes the unseen, unapproachable, unknowable and immaculate Lord.

How is it possible? How can such an identity be observed and experienced without having any physical dimensions? It can be observed and experienced as one experiences some other abstract phenomena such as the abstract feelings

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of lust and anger. These feelings are not physically visible, but one experiences their presence in one's system when these rise and emerge inside the system. The same faculty which registers and responds to the abstract feelings of anger and lust in our human system, also responds to the presence of the Divine and His manifestation in our system. As the birth of a feeling of anger expresses itself through our bodily gestures and movements and actions, similarly the Divine presence inside us manifests itself through our conduct. All our human words, deeds and actions spread an aura of Divine fragrance around us when the Divine manifests in us :

ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਜੋਤਿ ਹੈ ਸੋਇ ॥
ਤਿਸ ਦੈ ਚਾਨਣਿ ਸਭ ਮਹਿ ਚਾਨਣੁ ਹੋਇ ॥
ਗੁਰ ਸਾਖੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਪਰਗਟੁ ਹੋਇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 13*

Amongst all there is light and that light (art Thou).
By His light, the light shines within all the souls.
By the Guru's teaching the Divine light becomes manifest.

What is the technique to bring about the

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manifestation of Divine presence in us? This is the same technique which forms the title of this article : "Achieve your liberation by realizing your own self :

ਹਰਿ ਜਪਿ ਜੀਅਰੇ ਛੁਟੀਐ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਚੀਨੈ ਆਪੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 20

O' my soul! by understanding thy ownself and meditating on God, through the Guru, thou shall be released.

Guru Nanak tells us through these words that human mind gets rid of all (material) thought waves and becomes still and silent through meditation or practice of *Naam Simran*. In this state of total thoughtlessness, it recognizes its true sense of (birth, creation and nourishment) and after its recognition becomes liberated from the (material) every day worries.

How to realize, understand or recognize one's ownself?

It is possible only when a spiritual devotee is able to still his mind and make it immune to all kinds of thought waves through the practice of *Naam Simran*. It is a state of total thoughtlessness or absence of thought. This state is identifiable through the presence of three signs.

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First, it is a state of total darkness. Second, it is a state of total bliss. Third, there is that Being who experiences these two states of total darkness and total bliss simultaneously. This third factor, or Being is a witness to the existence of the first two states.

A spiritual seeker or devotee, during this advanced state of *Naam Simran*, should focus his attention on this new Being who is a witness to the two states of total darkness and total bliss rather than on these two states. This concentration on the third Being present during this state is the climax of meditation. In this state, a spiritual devotee should endeavour to explore his own self rather than searching for *Waheguru*. This exploration of one's Own Self is a turning point in the life of a practitioner of *Naam Simran*.

ਮਨ ਤੂੰ ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪੁ ਹੈ ਆਪਣਾ ਮੂਲੁ ਪਛਾਣੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 441

My mind, thou art the embodiment (image) of Divine light, so know thy source.

After arriving at this state of *Naam Simran*, the obstacles and roadblocks of lifetime get cleared, and a spiritual devotee starts channelising his energy towards the exploration of his own self

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rather than searching for *Waheguru*.

At this state, the spiritual seekers who profess allegiance to other religions fall a prey to serious illusions. They start proclaiming their own self as their original source and very often start making a wilful declaration that their own "Self" is the Divine. But followers of Guru Nanak's philosophy, sticking strictly to the teachings of *Gurbani*, reach their final destination without falling into these self-delusive traps. It must be remembered here that in the *Gurbani* statement quoted above, "Self" of man has been described as an image of the Divine rather than the Divine. There is a world of difference between the "Divine" and being an image of the Divine. An image can be an identical copy of a real object or Reality but it cannot be real or reality or the original itself. After understanding this difference between the two (the creator and the creation), through the following of *Gurbani's* prescribed path of *Naam Simran*, a *Gursikh* spiritual devotee remains an apostle of humility and obedient son of the Divine even at the highest state of *Naam Simran* or meditation.

When such a turning point comes during the

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most advanced state of *Naam Simran,* then the "Self" of a *Gursikh* spiritual devotee starts manifesting itself and becomes transparent. This state of spiritual realization or enlightenment is beyond description in linguistic terms :

ਨਾਨਕ ਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੁ ਦਿਸੈ ਜਾਹਰਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 397*

Nanak's King is seen manifest, everywhere.

A spiritual devotee should not stop his spiritual quest even after arriving at this state of spiritual enlightenment. He should try to verify if the source and origin, through whose grace, guidance and *Naam Simran,* he has achieved that enlightenment or realization about the real identity of his self, is surely the Divine or *Waheguru* Himself. He will realize that, yes, it is the *Waheguru,* on whose Name he has been concentrating, who has provided him this knowledge about his real identity through His grace and guidance. After this, a *Gursikh* devotee tries to seek whether his self has started reflecting all the Divine attributes mentioned in the *Gurbani.* He feels extremely delighted and fulfilled when he observes that his own "Self" has started reflecting those divine attributes through his words and deeds. Then he realizes the truth of

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this statement made by Guru Amardas (mentioned as the title of this article).

He also realizes that there is a world of difference between the mere reading of *Gurbani* statements such as these and the actual process of going through the spiritual experience contained in these lines.

Beyond this stage, a spiritual devotee carries on his quest and remains in such a continuous communion with the Divine that he finds it most painful to be separated from Him even for a moment. Then proceeding further, he continues to become a better and better image of the Divine and optimum embodiment of Divine attributes. Finally, he merges and unites with the Divine and becomes inseparable from Him on his own accord.

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Salvation

(ਮੁਕਤੀ)

Salvation is such a state of Being when the human self, getting rid of all kinds of desires and the corresponding mental thought waves, becomes an image and embodiment of the Divine after uniting with Him through the practice of *Naam Simran*. Human self, after uniting with the Divine, has no desire to take birth and goes on experiencing a sense of Divine bliss.

It is often misunderstood that the human self, after uniting with the Divine, loses his own identity. In other words, attaining the state of salvation or desirelessness is, quite often, confused with or considered synonymous with a state of annihilation or termination of the human self.

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But attainment of a state of salvation or *"Nirvana"* does not mean annihilation of the self. What it actually means is a higher state of being which is superior to the physical or biological state of being.

When a child becomes an adult, his childhood does not get annihilated but his childhood changes into a better and superior state of youth. In the same way, a human self experiences a greater benefit and bliss in a spiritual state of Being after realizing the various kinds of handicaps and disadvantages of existing in a physical and biological states of being after passing through a cycle of several births and deaths. Human self develops a fascination for existing in a spiritual state of Being. But this urge to exist in a superior state does not mean an annihilation of the lower state of being. On the other hand, it is a promotion of the self to a higher state of existence. A seed, after growing into a plant, does not lose its identity but grows into a tree and produces more seeds through its leaves, buds and flowers. The growth of a seed into a tree should not be considered the death of a seed, but its development into a tree.

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Union of the human with the Divine after salvation does not mean that the self gets imprisoned in the Divine and that it can never return to its physical or biological state. In fact, it is never so. Even in a state of salvation, the self has a perfect freedom to come into any state of being, although it is an other matter that he being in state of Divine bliss, can never experience that state of bliss in a lower state of being :

ਕਬੀਰ ਜਿਸੁ ਮਰਨੇ ਤੇ ਜਗੁ ਡਰੈ ਮੇਰੈ ਮਨਿ ਆਨੰਦੁ ॥
ਮਰਨੇ ਹੀ ਤੇ ਪਾਈਐ ਪੂਰਨੁ ਪਰਮਾਨੰਦੁ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1365*

Kabir, death, of which the world is terrified, is pleasing unto my mind; it is in death alone, that one is blessed with the perfect supreme bliss.

It is because of this privilege of being in a state of bliss, that human self never wishes to come back into a lower state of being in a corporal body. But there is no restriction whatsoever on his self that he can never acquire a physical state of being if he so desires. The state of salvation appears to be a horrible and horrifying state to the pilgrims of spiritual voyage in its initial stages. After developing a strong attachment with their corporal or biological state

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of Being through their experience of several births in this state, they feel scared of existing in a spiritual state of Being and uniting with the Divine as stated in Saint Kabir's statement :

ਸੁੰਨਹਿ ਸੁੰਨੁ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਪਵਨ ਰੂਪ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਵਹਿਗੇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1103

Meeting with the Supreme Soul, my soul shall become transparent like the air.

and his celebratory tone in this statement. Such seekers of spiritual bliss should not feel scared of such a superior state of being because this superior spiritual state arrives only when a spiritual seeker becomes eligible for entry into it and develops a keen fascination for obtaining this state. This state of union with the Divine is never imposed on him. It is acquired by his own self, through a rigorous effort of *Naam Simran*. It is his spiritual practice which makes him eligible for it and produces such a keen urge for his union with the Divine as has been mentioned in Saint Kabir's emphatic statement.

As a billionaire, whenever he desires, can live at the lower level of a millionaire or as a completely poor person, similarly, a spiritually realized and enlightened self, who has achieved

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the state of salvation or *Nirvana*, has a complete freedom to exist at a lower level of mere physical or biological existence. As a billionaire has a complete freedom to lead the life of a poor person and there is no bar to stop him from living at the lower level of existence, similarly a spiritual devotee enjoying the super most state of spiritual bliss has a complete freedom to exist at lower levels and there is no bar against exercising such a choice. Thus, the freedom of choice either to exist at a lower or higher state of spirituality, remains always available to a spiritual devotee.

Gurbani's statements :

ਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮੁਕਤਿ ਨ ਚਾਹਉ ਮਨਿ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਿ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲਾਰੇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 534

I desire not empire and I desire not salvation;
my soul longs for the love of Thine lotus feet.

ਮੁਕਤਿ ਬਪੁੜੀ ਭੀ ਗਿਆਨੀ ਤਿਆਗੇ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 1078***
The Lord-divine even forsakes the desire of poor emancipation.

It also means that these highest states of spiritual bliss i.e. state of salvation or *Nirvana* can not be imposed on a spiritual devotee against his will or choice. It is devotee's own free will that he may enjoy the spiritual bliss and ecstasy of

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choosing to stay in a state of salvation or Nirvana. During the state of spiritual meditation or *Naam Simran,* the spiritual devotee and spiritual bliss are two separate entities, but at the highest state of salvation, spiritual devotee and spiritual bliss become inseparable. As a sweetening agent like sugar and its quality of sweetness are inseparable and as sugar cannot taste and enjoy its sweetness, similarly at the highest spiritual state of salvation, the spiritually enriched self and the Divine become inseparable.

Some of us must have observed boys propelling a circular steering ring on the ground. The wooden or steel rod in the hand of a boy keeps on propelling the steel ring time and again. The moment the speed of the rolling steel ring declines, the boy, running along the rolling steel ring, keeps on propelling this ring by pushing it with the touch of a rod in his hand which accelerates the speed of the rolling steel ring. The choice to increase or decrease the speed of the rolling steel ring lies with the boy with the rod. When the running boy gets tired and stops propelling the rolling steel ring, it stops rolling after a few minutes and ultimately falls down.

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After this stage, both the boy and the steel ring come to a stand still position. But whenever the boy desires to propel, he can again make the steel ring roll by propelling it with a rod. Nothing else except his own bodily fatigue or his own saturation with the game, can stop him from rolling this steel ring. He has complete freedom either to start playing with the steel ring once again whenever he desires or not to play this game at all. By the same analogy, a spiritual practitioner realizes that the entry into the birth and death cycle depends on his thought waves. It is his choice whether to activate his thought waves or to make these still and silent. It is his own sweet will either to enter into and propel the birth-death cycle with the exercise of his magic wand of mental thought waves or to get out of this cycle of birth and death by controlling and stilling his mental thoughts. As a boy in the steel ring analogy may develop a liking for some other indoor game and altogether abandon his earlier hobby of playing with the steel ring, similarly a spiritual devotee, after attaining a state of salvation or *Nirvana*, may get so much engrossed in his experience of spiritual bliss and ecstasy that

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he may altogether forget about his earlier and lower state of physical and biological existence or may start considering this kind of existence as a very inferior kind of existence. In that case, he may not opt to enter once again into the cycle of birth and death. Whole of this freedom of choice is vested with a spiritual devotee. He can either get into a cycle of physical existence or continue to enjoy a state of spiritual bliss according to his own free will. The Divine Will, at every stage, continues to assist and cooperate with the will and wish of a spiritual devotee, devoted to and perfected in *Naam Simran*.

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Our Real Self

(ਸਾਡਾ ਅਸਲ ਆਪਾ)

A train arrives at a railway station and stops at a platform. After a few minutes, an other train arrives and stops at the side platform. Both the trains are packed with passengers. The passengers of both the standing trains look at each other.

After a few minutes, one of the trains starts moving. The passengers sitting inside the stationary train start feeling as if their own train is moving and the actually moving train at the next platform is stationary. This kind of sight continues for a few minutes. But, after a few minutes the moving train crosses the platform and disappears. Then the passengers sitting in a stationary train, who have been feeling as if their own train has been moving, feel extremely surprised that their own train is still standing on

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the platform. It was the other train which was actually moving and is now gone. They feel highly surprised when they observe the two stationary platforms and their own train standing on one of these platforms. Then they realize that their own train has not moved. It was still standing on the platform. It was the illusion of their own eyes. This phenomenon is called an optical illusion in English language. Due to this phenomenon, we observe our own self moving instead of observing the movement of the actually moving object. A similar phenomenon takes place during the night when the sky is overcast with clouds. Instead of observing the moving clouds in the sky, we observe as if the moon is moving among the clouds. It is also an incident of optical illusion or the illusion of our own eyes. This phenomenon of optical illusion can help us a lot in the understanding of our own self. When we focus or project our senses outside, we observe that all the objects of this visible universe are moving and changing each and every minute and also feel that we ourselves are also changing and moving with the moving and changing objects. We also find as if time is also moving and

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changing all the time. We observe the day break with Sun's light, changing into morning, bright day, mid-noon, afternoon, evening and night. The night gives way to day and this cycle of time keeps on moving and changing continuously.

Whatever we observe, during this moving and changing cycle of day and night, also seems to be changing and moving. All the creatures of this universe are moving and changing. First of all, every creature appears from nowhere and gets born. Then every creature, passing through the stages of childhood, youth and old age, disappears into the unknown after passing through the stages of death. In this way; we observe all the objects of this universe involved in this ever-moving cycle of change and flux.

But, on the contrary, we observe a very surprising phenomenon taking place inside our own self when we focus our senses and energy inside through self-introspection and inner reflection instead of focusing our senses and energy on the objects of outside by being extroverts. During this process of introspection and self-analysis, we observe that while all other

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objects in the outer universe are moving and changing each moment, our own self is stationary and still as it has always been. All kinds of changes took place in front of our own self, but it itself remained stationary and unchanged. It kept on witnessing all those changes and remained a witness to all these changes.

Many incidents from the past passed before our self and our self observed those incidents in the form of a witness. It could observe those changes only because it itself remained unchanged. The cycle of changing seasons consisting of summer, winter, autumn and spring came and went and our own self kept on watching these changing seasons. While itself remaining still and unchanging, our self kept observing the heat of summer, the storms, the falling rain during monsoons and bright sunlight during summer days. Similar stages of day dreaming and deep sound sleep keep on coming and going and our self keeps on watching these stages as a witness. In the same manner, various kinds of states of depression, happiness, tension, anxiety, health and sickness, poverty and affluence, love and hatred keep on appearing

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before our self. Our self keeps on witnessing these phenomena like a witness but it itself remains stationary and unchanging.

When we are ignorant about our own self, we and our self get lost and carried away with the ever-changing phenomena. In that state of ignorance, it feels that it itself is moving and changing. It is because of this ignorance that the self feels that once he (it) was a child, then he became young and has now grown old. But it is the same kind of illusion which the passengers, sitting in the stationary train felt as if their own train was moving. But the fact is that it has been totally opposite to what we have been observing and experiencing.

Likewise, when we reach Calcutta after traveling from Delhi, we feel that we have covered such a long distance. But it is a geographical distance that we have covered. In real terms, our self has neither travelled nor covered nor even changed a bit. Only the various railway stations of Delhi, Kanpur, Allahabad, Burdwan and Howra cities have passed before our self. Our self, throughout this long journey, has remained the same, unchanged and

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unchangeable.

This kind of illusion ceases to exist for the practitioner of *Naam Simran*. During his spells of meditation and *Naam Simran*, intense concentration and introspection, he crosses through the several layers of his ego and arrives at a state where he finds his self as completely stationary, unchanging and unchangeable and permanently lodged in itself. He observes and realizes that all other objects, except his own self, have been changing and moving and that his own self has remained the same.

After doing so much practice of *Naam Simran* and realizing the true identity of one's real self, he finds his self as if it has no relationship with the various states of lust, anger, avarice, attachment and pride. He finds his self alienated from these ups and downs of life. As a result, these phenomena such as those of lust, anger have no effect on his self. It is in a state of ignorance that we feel angry and proud while passing through these states. But once we have realized that these phenomena cannot affect us as they pass through us. These pass away without leaving any stain on our self. Our self has been

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a mere witness to these states of lust, anger, avarice and attachment, observing these phenomena as an outsider and as a mere witness. With more practice of *Naam Simran,* these phenomena cease to appear before our self. Our self also forgets about these phenomena altogether.

Death is also one such phenomenon which appears before our self and passes away without causing any damage to our self because self is only a witness to death rather than its companion. The *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* describes the true identity of the self as an image and embodiment of the eternal Divine.

ਅਚਰਜ ਕਥਾ ਮਹਾ ਅਨੂਪ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਾਤਮਾ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਾ ਰੂਪੁ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬੂਢਾ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬਾਲਾ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਦੂਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਮ ਜਾਲਾ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦੀ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 868*

Wondrous and greatly unequalled is the description of the beauty of the Supreme Soul and Glorious God.
He is not old, nor is He young.
He has no sorrow, nor is He caught in the

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death's noose.
He neither perishes, nor departs He.
In the beginning and from commencement of ages, He is contained everywhere.

It is because of this eternity and permanence of the self, that *Gurbani* insists upon self-introspection and self-realisation through *Naam Simran*. Realisation of the self is the realization of Truth or the Divine :

ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਬੂਝੈ ਸੋਇ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 2***
He who recognises his trueself comprehends Him.

ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣੈ ਘਰਿ ਵਸੈ ਹਉਮੈ ਤ੍ਰਿਸਨਾ ਜਾਇ ॥ ***ਅੰਗ - 5***
By recognising his realself man abides in his own home and his ego and desire depart.

ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕ ਬਿਨੁ ਆਪਾ ਚੀਨੈ ਮਿਟੈ ਨ ਭ੍ਰਮ ਕੀ ਕਾਈ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 68
Without knowing one's realself, O Nanak, the moss (filth) of doubt is removed not.

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The Fourth State Of Bliss

(ਤੁਰੀਆ ਪਦ)

ਜਾਗਰਤ ਸੁਪਨ, ਸਖੋਪਤ, ਤੁਰੀਆ।
ਆਤਮ ਭੂਪਤ ਕੀ ਇਹ ਪੁਰੀਆ। (ਪੈਂਤੀਸ ਅਖਰੀ)

These lines of *Gurbani* state that our own (human) self is our true and real sovereign. It exists in its four states or lives in its four abodes. These four states or abodes are states of wakefulness, dream state, state of sound sleep and the *Turia Pad* the fourth State of Bliss. We have an awareness about the first three states and spend whole of our life while existing in these three states.

But the teachings of ancient scriptures and *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* state that all these three states of wakefulness, dream state and state of sound

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sleep are an illusion. These are three stages of the same illusion. But beyond this state of illusion, there is the state of *Turia* which is the real state and abode of our human self. Illusion stands for deception, fraud and ignorance. Illusion is that which appears to exist but has no existence. Illusion is two-in-one entity or phenomenon of truth and illusion because it appears to be true but is actually an illusion. There are quite a number of descriptions of this phenomena such as :

ਤੀਨਿ ਬਿਆਪਹਿ ਜਗਤ ਕਉ ਤੁਰੀਆ ਪਾਵੈ ਕੋਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 297

The three qualities are harassing the world and some rare one attains the fourth state of bliss.

It means, that the creatures of the whole world exist in these three states of wakefulness, dream state and state of deep slumber and they are getting duped by these three states of the same illusion. He is a very blessed person who is aware of and exists in a (spiritually) superior state of *Turia*. It has also been described as the fourth state of existence in *Gurbani* such as :

ਨਾਨਕ ਚਉਥੇ ਪਦ ਮਹਿ ਸੋ ਜਨੁ ਗਤਿ ਪਾਏ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 284

O Nanak, the devotee obtains salvation and gets into the fourth state of beatitude.

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ਚਉਥੇ ਪਦ ਕਉ ਜੋ ਨਰੁ ਚੀਨੈ ਤਿਨ ਹੀ ਪਰਮ ਪਦੁ ਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 1123

The man, who realises the fourth state of bliss; he alone obtains the supreme status.

It means that majority of us experience the three states of wakefulness, dream state and state of sound slumber. All these three states are temporary and false states of ignorance and alienation. The fourth state of the *Turia Pad* beyond these three illusory states is the truly real, permanent state of being. A spiritual devotee given to *Naam Simran,* chooses this fourth state as his destination in life.

What constitutes this fourth state or *Turia Pad*? What are its contours? Its identity can only be recognized through the practice of *Naam Simran* and the spiritual experience acquired through meditation. In this article, we (the author) will endeavour to convey this unique spiritual experience through the somewhat imperfect medium of written word so that the practitioners of *Naam Simran* may have a glimpse (even if vague and approximate) of this spiritual experience and may even achieve that state of being through the practice of *Naam Simran.*

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Although it must be kept in mind that achievement of this spiritual state depends mainly on the Divine grace, yet a spiritual devotee must continue to make humble efforts for its achievement through *Naam Simran* and meditation. Humble efforts coupled with earnest prayers pave the path for His Divine grace and prove very effective and helpful.

It is very essential to have knowledge of the first three stages before realizing the state of *Turia Pad*. In the first state of wakefulness, we observe, feel, experience, and enjoy the variety of material things through the medium of human senses. It is also incumbent that we should possess a physical human body and there must exist a visible material world in order to consume the material things in a state of wakefulness.

The dream state is one which comes into existence from within our own self. Since this state is born from within, we observe, experience the objects of this abstract, immaterial world through our own unconscious self. Since this state exists at our unconscious level, there is no dimension of space in this state.

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The third state of sound slumber is one in which we do not have any desire for any material or immaterial object. All objects of the first two states disappear in this third state and a person in this deep state of sleep, shutting the windows of his mind, heart and other senses, goes into such a state where there is nothing else except his own single self. We enjoy the peace and bliss of our own self in this state. This state opens a windows to the other two states of wakefulness and dream state. There is neither any desire nor any dream in this state that we can experience. We enjoy the bliss of this state and remember its blissfulness even after coming out of this state. Since there is no visible or observable object in this state, it does not mean that we cease to exist in this state. The fact is that we remain present and alive in this state and our consciousness also remains intact and alive. Since there is neither any visible object nor we have any desire for anything, we do not observe any object in this state. After emerging out of this state of deep sleep, we can say that since nothing existed there, we felt extremely happy and delighted in that state. When we remark that we did not observe

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any object in that state, we actually mean that we were present there but we did not notice anything there since there was no visible object there. What is to be taken note of is that we could see even in that deep state of slumber although we can not define what we observed there. The observer was there, but since there was nothing to observe there, the observer did not observe anything. When we enter a room filled with pitch darkness, we do not see anything. Our remark that we did not see anything there in the dark room proves that we were present there but there was nothing to be seen. In the similar state of deep sleep, we are present but there is no visible object there. A *Gursikh* spiritual devotee who has realized that he is as much present in the state of deep slumber as he has been present in the first two states of wakefulness and dreaming, has covered a long distance in his spiritual voyage. In all these three states of wakefulness, dream state and state of deep slumber, it is this entity that enjoys and experiences their different visible or invisible experiences in his own self. Our self passes through all these states or in other words, these three states cross through our self. Our self keeps

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on observing and enjoying these states as an observer or a witness. Knowledge of life consists of the knowledge of these three states of wakefulness, dream state and state of deep slumber. Those who regard life, consisting of a single state of wakefulness, have an incomplete knowledge of life. Knowledge of life consists of the sum total of knowledge of all these three states.

Our self goes on passing through these three states and experiencing their ingredients. So complete knowledge consists of the total knowledge of these three states and the knowledge of self which goes even beyond these three states. This knowledge of the self has been described as a state of Nirvana (detachment), state of fearlessness and state of supreme bliss or *Turia Pad*. To arrive at this state and to have the knowledge of this state through experience or practice of *Naam Simran,* is the knowledge of the Divine or union with Him or the knowledge of Truth.

It is not very difficult to understand that dreams are never true and real. Whatever we see

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in a dream disappears when we wake up. Then we feel convinced that whatever we have observed during a dream was not real even in a dream. Although it appeared in our dream, but in reality it was nothing. It was our mistake that we considered our dream to be real even during a dream. It existed neither during the dream nor exists even after coming out of the dream.

But we find it quite difficult to understand the implications of statements in *Gurbani* which compare this material world to a dream. For example, see the following *Gurbani* statements :

ਜੈਸਾ ਸੁਪਨਾ ਰੈਨਿ ਕਾ ਤੈਸਾ ਸੰਸਾਰ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 808*
As is the night's dream, so is this transient world.

ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਧੂਏ ਕਾ ਪਹਾਰ ॥
ਤੈ ਸਾਚਾ ਮਾਨਿਆ ਕਿਹ ਬਿਚਾਰਿ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 1187*
This world is the mountain of smoke.
What thought has made thee deem it real?

ਭਰਾ ਭਰਮੁ ਮਿਟਾਵਹੁ ਅਪਨਾ ॥
ਇਆ ਸੰਸਾਰੁ ਸਗਲ ਹੈ ਸੁਪਨਾ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 258*
Cast off thine doubt. This world is all a dream.

ਸਮ ਸੁਪਨੈ ਕੈ ਇਹੁ ਜਗੁ ਜਾਨੁ ॥

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ਬਿਨਸੈ ਛਿਨ ਮੈ ਸਾਚੀ ਮਾਨੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1187

Know thou that this world is like a dream. It shall perish in a moment. Accept thou this as true.

Gurbani states that the state of wakefulness is also a dream state. Although we see a dream during sleep, but what we observe even during state of wakefulness is also a dream. All the objects, scenes and the whole activity observed during a dream state disappear when we wake up. But what we observe and experience in a state of wakefulness also keep on changing into a dream, disappearing and getting out of our reach. During a flashback on our own past life, whole of our past life appears to be a dream.

In the state of deep sound, sleep, although we feel happiness or comfort, but we remain in a state of ignorance. We go to sleep in ignorance and get up from sleep in ignorance. We remain as ignorant on waking up as we were while going to sleep. We were as ignorant before sleeping as we are after getting up from sleep. The only feeling that we experience is that of a few hours of peace and comfort.

Thus, in both the state of wakefulness and

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sleep, whatever we observe disappears, passes over quickly through our self and then disappears. We experience some comfort during sleep, but we remain ignorant and do not gain any knowledge about life.

The ancient scriptures and *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* state that there is an other state beyond these three states of wakefulness, sleep and dreaming and dream-less deep sleep. In this fourth state, the first three states cease to exist and our self experiences the blissful experience of this fourth state. This state has been termed as *Turia Pad*, fourth state, state of fearlessness, state of *Nirvana* or state of supreme bliss.

When one enters and awakes into this state, the whole phenomenal existence of the world of phenomena disappears. Neither one dreams in this state nor one experiences the loss of consciousness of a sleep state in the new state of being. Only the self, who has been experimenting with several experiences during the earlier three states of wakefulness, dreaming and slumber, is now left alone without his earlier experiences of the phenomenal world. The self, in this state of bliss, experiences an ecstatic bliss, equanimity and

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peace and poise, which were absent during the first three states. As the self gets settled in this supreme spiritual state, it starts experiencing a feeling of bliss, and supreme happiness from within. It has never experienced such a sense of bliss earlier. Along with this sense of bliss, the self experiences that there neither exists anything else except his own self nor can anything else ever exist. It is an exclusive state of the self which is extremely blissful.

When a spiritual devotee in this state of *Turia Pad* feels convinced that there neither is nor can there be anything else besides the self, it feels convinced about its immortal and eternal existence. When this self feels the reality about its immortality and eternity of its existence and when it feels there is no possibility of existence of any other entity except its own self, it becomes free from all kinds of fear and malice. This absence of fear and malice from the self follows the absence of any other self except the presence of one's own eternal and immortal self. A spiritual devotee, after achieving this state of fearlessness and absence of malice, realizes the immortality and eternity of his own self and experiences that he

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is an image and embodiment of the eternal Divine. This final integration of the self with the Divine makes him free from the cycle of birth and death. Why should one, who is immortal, take birth? He alone needs to die who is to take birth again. When one is never going to die, why should one take birth? So, a spiritual devotee gets liberated from the cycle of death and birth after achieving this state of *Turia Pad*. His self crosses the boundaries of birth and death.

Further, the spiritually enriched self through the practice of *Naam Simran* achieving the supreme state of *Turia Pad* feels eternal, immortal, without fear and favour, beyond the boundaries of time, birth and death. He realizes that he alone can be eternal and true who never undergoes any change and who is eternally present. Like the Divine, the self, who is an image and embodiment of the Divine, is also self-created, self-born and self-sustaining forever.

After realizing that all the Divine attributes of truth, eternity, immortality, changelessness, self-creation and birth-death liberation are as transparently present in the human self as in the identity of the Divine, he realizes, as if in a flash

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back, that his earlier existence in the three lower states of wakefulness, slumber and dream state was due to the ignorance of his own realself. The world that existed in the three lower states was also due to the ignorance of the self. Now after arriving at a state of complete enlightenment and realization, there is no need to exist in those three lower states of being.

This realization further leads to a search for the source which brought the self to such an enlightened state. Who ignited the spark for this spiritual realization? Who made him adopt the path of *Naam Simran* and whose grace or benevolence brought about this spiritual enlightenment? Who led his self from ignorance to enlightenment? The answer comes in the form of a spiritual discovery that even this source of enlightenment was his own self who has been leading him through the three lower states of wakefulness and dream slumber state. Even the grace which dawned upon him was the grace of his own self since his own self was an integral part of the Divine. Therefore, God's Name and its *Simran* tastes very sweet and palatable to him since it is a song of his own self as well. After

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that, carrying on his symphony of *Naam Simran* a spiritual devotee's self becomes as integrated with and inseparable from the Divine as a ray of light is inseparable from the sun :

ਸੂਰਜ ਕਿਰਣਿ ਮਿਲੇ ਜਲ ਕਾ ਜਲੁ ਹੂਆ ਰਾਮ ॥
ਜੋਤੀ ਜੋਤਿ ਰਲੀ ਸੰਪੂਰਨੁ ਥੀਆ ਰਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 84

As the ray blends with the Sun and wate becomes water, so merges the human light i the Supreme Light and becomes perfect.

ਆਪੁ ਪਛਾਣਹਿ ਤਾ ਸਚੁ ਜਾਣਹਿ ਸਾਚੇ ਸੋਝੀ ਹੋਈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 7

When they understand themselves, then kno they the True Master.

ਜਨਮਿ ਮਰੈ ਤ੍ਰੈ ਗੁਣ ਹਿਤਕਾਰੁ ॥
ਚਾਰੇ ਬੇਦ ਕਥਹਿ ਆਕਾਰੁ ॥
ਤੀਨਿ ਅਵਸਥਾ ਕਹਹਿ ਵਖਿਆਨੁ ॥
ਤੁਰੀਆਵਸਥਾ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਨੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1

He who loves the three qualities contin coming and going.
The four Vedas describe only the visible for They explain and expound the three men states.
The fourth state of communion with the Lo is known through the Divine True Guru.

ਆਸਾ ਮਨਸਾ ਦੋਊ ਬਿਨਾਸਤ ਤ੍ਰਿਹੁ ਗੁਣ ਆਸ ਨਿਰਾਸ ਭਈ ॥

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ਤੁਰੀਆਵਸਥਾ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਸੰਤ ਸਭਾ ਕੀ ਓਟ ਲਗੀ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 356

Both hope and desire I have dispelled, and I have renounced longing for mammon of three qualities.
By seeking the shelter of the congregation of saints, the true sikh of the Guru, obtains the ecstatic state.

ਤ੍ਰੈਗੁਣ ਮਾਇਆ ਮੋਹੁ ਪਸਾਰਾ ਸਭ ਵਰਤੈ ਆਕਾਰੀ ॥
ਤੁਰੀਆ ਗੁਣੁ ਸਤਸੰਗਤਿ ਪਾਈਐ ਨਦਰੀ ਪਾਰਿ ਉਤਾਰੀ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 1260

The ostentation of the love of the three qualitied mammon is pervading all the bodies.
Associating with the saints, the state of eternal beatitude is obtained and the Merciful Master ferries across the mortal.

ਤ੍ਰੈ ਗੁਣ ਤਿਆਗਿ ਦੁਰਜਨ ਮੀਤ ਸਮਾਨੇ ॥
ਤੁਰੀਆ ਗੁਣੁ ਮਿਲਿ ਸਾਧ ਪਛਾਨੇ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਸਹਜ ਗੁਫਾ ਮਹਿ ਆਸਣੁ ਬਾਧਿਆ ॥
ਜੋਤਿ ਸਰੂਪ ਅਨਾਹਦੁ ਵਾਜਿਆ ॥
ਮਹਾ ਅਨੰਦੁ ਗੁਰ ਸਬਦੁ ਵੀਚਾਰਿ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਿਅ ਸਿਉ ਰਾਤੀ ਧਨ ਸੋਹਾਗਣਿ ਨਾਰਿ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਜਨ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੇ ਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਬੀਚਾਰੁ ॥
ਜੋ ਸੁਣੇ ਕਮਾਵੈ ਸੁ ਉਤਰੈ ਪਾਰਿ ॥
ਜਨਮਿ ਨ ਮਰੈ ਨ ਆਵੈ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਸੇਤੀ ਓਹੁ ਰਹੈ ਸਮਾਇ ॥

ਅੰਗ - 370

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Abandoning the three qualities, I deem an evi
person and a friend the same (alike).
Meeting the saintly Guru I have realised the
excellences of the fourth (highest) state of mind
In the cave of celestial poise, I have acquired
a seat.
God, the embodiment of lights, has played fo
me the celestial music.
Supreme joy I have obtained by meditating on
Guru's hymns.
Imbued with my Beloved, I have become
blessed and happy wife.
Slave Nanak utters the meditation of the Lord
He, who hears and practises it, is saved.
He is born not, nor does he die. He comes and
goes not.
With God, he remains blended.

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Creation And Extinction

(ਉਪਜਨਾ-ਬਿਨਸਨਾ)

After the achievement of *Turiya* Pad or union of the human self with the Divine, a spiritual devotee, steeped in and enriched with Divinity, goes into a state of spiritual ecstasy or spiritual trance. But when he comes out of this state of spiritual trance, he finds the outer world a construct of mental pictures which are imaginary rather than real. The moment he goes into a spiritual trance, this mentally created world disappears and seems to have no identity of its own. In other words, it loses its existence. He also realizes that whenever the image of the material world appears before him during the temporary coming out of his self from the Divine, it is for his recreation like the images projected on a cinematic screen. He realizes that this material

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world creation is just like a copy of the cinematic film which has no reality of its own, but an illusion. It appears real till one is ignorant. Ignorant spectators sitting in a cinema hall start taking a projected film as real which, in reality, is artificial. Dream also appears to be real till one is in a state of slumber, but disappears, the moment one wakes up from sleep. Similarly, a spiritual devotee's self, after his union with the Divine, finds the material world merged into the Divine. It is at this stage of realization that a spiritual devotee realizes the truth and scientific veracity of statements recorded in *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* which call this material world a myth, an illusion or a smoke screen :

ਜਗੁ ਸੁਪਨਾ ਬਾਜੀ ਬਨੀ ਖਿਨ ਮਹਿ ਖੇਲੁ ਖੇਲਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 18

This world is like a drama staged in a dream, in a moment this play ends.

ਢੰਢੋਲਿਮੁ ਢੂਢਿਮੁ ਡਿਠੁ ਮੈ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਗੁ ਧੂਏ ਕਾ ਧਵਲਹਰੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 138

Searching and seeking I have seen, O' Nanak! that the world is a mansion of smoke.

ਜਾਤੋ ਜਾਇ ਕਹਾ ਤੇ ਆਵੈ ॥
ਕਹ ਉਪਜੈ ਕਹ ਜਾਇ ਸਮਾਵੈ ॥
ਕਿਉ ਬਾਧਿਓ ਕਿਉ ਮੁਕਤੀ ਪਾਵੈ ॥

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ਕਿਉ ਅਬਿਨਾਸੀ ਸਹਜਿ ਸਮਾਵੈ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 152

Can it be known, whence the man has come?
Where has he sprung from, and whither does he go and merge?
How is he bound down, and how does he obtain emancipation?
How is he easily absorbed in the Imperishable Lord?

ਸਹਜੇ ਆਵੈ ਸਹਜੇ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੁਕਤੋ ਬੰਧੁ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਿ ਛੁਟੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 152

Subject to natural law the man comes, and subject to the natural law he departs.
From mind's desires he is sprung, and in mind's desires he is absorbed.
The Guru-ward is emancipated, and falls not into entanglements.
He ponders over the Divine word, and is delivered through God's Name.

When such a blessed spiritual devotee, who has attained spiritual enlightenment through the practice of *Naam Simran*, emerges out of his enlightened self, he finds that the whole material creation is a mental construct of his own mind and disappears into the mind when it is shut off.

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His mind emerges and disappears into his soul as his soul emerges and disappears into the Divine. He observes that the mentally created world is an imaginary and illusory world which consists of visual images created by the mental thought waves. Thus, a spiritual devotee, at the highest state of spiritual realization, gets rid of this illusion that the material world is an illusion. Then he further realizes that since the material world is an illusion, its various ingredients are also illusory. Therefore, all the phenomena of this world such as birth, death, sin, virtue, suffering, happiness, ailment and good health are also illusory. These are neither real nor permanent. These states are the result of the separation or alienation of his own self from the Divine. When mind has no tangible identity but a sum total of mental thought waves, the mental constructs created by those mental thoughts also have no identity. A spiritual devotee gets liberated from the phenomena of sin, suffering, affliction and death, since these are mental constructs of the mentally created world. But it is not always inevitable that a spiritual devotee unites with the Divine immediately after achieving this state of

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enlightenment. Such an enlightened devotee becomes the master of his mind which carries out the commands of his enlightened self. Now, his self allows the birth of only noble thoughts and noble deeds in his mind. Therefore, even when living a physical and biological existence, he leads a life of joy, peace, freedom from tension and worry, fear and dependence thus leading an ideal existence. But when it gets saturated even with this kind of ideal existence, he, willfully, loses his physical, biological identity forever and merges and unites with the Divine slowly and steadily :

ਸਹਜੇ ਆਵੈ ਸਹਜੇ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਉਪਜੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਮੁਕਤੋ ਬੰਧੁ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥ ਸਬਦੁ ਬੀਚਾਰਿ ਛੁਟੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਇ ॥
ਅੰਗ - 152

Subject to natural law the man comes, and subject to the natural law he departs.
From mind's desires he is sprung, and in mind's desires he is absorbed.
The Guru-ward is emancipated, and falls not into entanglements.
He ponders over the Divine word, and is delivered through God's Name.

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"Ek Chit Jeh Ek Chhin Dhiayo
Kaal Faas Ke Beech Naa Ayio"

(ਏਕ ਚਿਤ ਜਹਿ ਇਕ ਛਿਨ ਧਿਆਇਓ ॥
ਕਾਲ ਫਾਸ ਕੇ ਬੀਚ ਨ ਆਇਓ ॥)

A moment of complete concentration on God's Name,
Liberates a devotee from the cycle of birth and death.

After reading this pious statement of Guru Gobind Singh, which guarantees an eternal liberation from the vicious cycle of birth and death, one questions its veracity especially in the light of other such statements of *Gurbani* which state that a *Gursikh* should meditate upon God's Name round the clock rather than for a single moment :

ਊਠਤ ਬੈਠਤ ਸੋਵਤ ਨਾਮ ॥
ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਜਨ ਕੈ ਸਦ ਕਾਮ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 286

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To repeat the Name, whilst standing, sitting and sleeping, says Nanak, is ever, the avocation of God's slave.

But Guru Gobind Singh reiterates that even a single moment of complete concentration on God's Name can catapult a *Gursikh* to a supreme state of salvation. What is the mystery behind this statement?

The reason behind this mystery is that the mind of a *Gursikh* devotee begins concentrating on God's Name after a life time of practice of *Naam Simran*. One is unable to concentrate at all in the early stages of *Naam Simran*. But if a devotee persists in his practice of *Naam Simran* seeking inspiration from *Gurbani*, then his mind begins to concentrate for short spells of time, providing him peace and sense of bliss. But in between these spells of concentration, his mind keeps on wavering and thinking about worldly affairs.

But if a *Gurmukh* perseveres in his practice of *Naam Simran* after seeking inspiration and incentive from his reading of *Gurbani*, then a stage comes when his mind starts concentrating and enjoying the spiritual bliss. After so much

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practice, a devotee can willfully focus and concentrate his mind on God's Name and enjoy the spiritual bliss provided by God's Name. He also keeps on acquiring spiritual knowledge about Divine attributes during his readings of *Gurbani* and practice of *Naam Simran*. He gets convinced about the permanent and eternal relationship of his human self with the Divine. He also gets familiar with the divine attributes of the God head such as those of His compassionate, forever forgiving disposition irrespective of human acts of omission and commission and His sanctifying temperament of cleansing and liberating even the most depraved human beings.

As a *Gursikh* devotee carries on with his practice of *Naam Simran*, there arrives such an auspicious stage in life when this spiritual devotee becomes an expert in this practice of spiritual therapy and an authority and apostle of spiritual knowledge. Then, he can plug in and switch on his mind to *Naam Simran* at any moment of his own convenience and choice and get a thrill of spiritual bliss by getting into communion with the Divine.

At this stage, a *Gursikh* devotee does not face

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those problems in concentrating and meditating which he had faced during the early stages. Now he has become familiar with all the landmarks of his spiritual voyage. He can reach his spiritual source, crossing over all those hurdles in a jiffy, and chooses to stay at his chosen destination for as long as he wishes to stay. In other words, he is able to establish a communion with the divine very easily and very quickly and remains in communion with the Divine for an unspecified period of time. After acquiring a thorough knowledge of the process of *Naam Simran* and *Gurmat*, A *Gursikh* devotee starts recognizing and believing in his permanent relationship with the Divine as well as his real permanent destination. After this realization of relationship and its permanence, there develops a keen urge in a devotee to remain in continuous communion with the Divine.

It is this kind of permanent communion and bonding with the Divine which has been hinted and pointed out in the sacred statement of Guru Gobind Singh quoted in the beginning of this article. It is this state and level of concentration on God's Name and communion achieved with

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the Divine. Such a spiritually enlightened and enriched devotee can even opt to stay in permanent union and communion with the Divine and never return to this daily life of worldly affairs and physical senses.

It is, therefore, never the import and intention of Guru Gobind Singh's sacred statement that there is no need for round the clock *Naam Simran*. On the contrary, it indicates towards the highest state of meditation which sometimes arrives after a lifetime of meditation and *Naam Simran*. At such a lofty state of spiritual awakening and enlightenment, even a moment of *Naam Simran* can bring about a permanent communion and union with the Divine.

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The (Mystical) State Of Nirvana

(ਨਿਰਵਾਨ ਪਦ)

Question : Which state is the state of Nirvana?

Answer : The highest state of meditation or *Naain Simran* is the state of *Nirvana*. It is also known by several other names such as *Nirbhay, Nirvana, Turia Pad* or *Nirvikalap* state of meditation.

Question : What are the landmarks or signs and symbols or marks of identification of this mystical state?

Answer : When a spiritual devotee or practitioner of *Naam Simran* is able to exercise complete control over physical senses and kinds of mental thoughts and the visual images produced by these thoughts; when a devotee is able to control his mind from roaming around in

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all directions and focus it on his own inner self and is able to prolong this spell of focusing and concentration for as long as he wishes; when a devotee comes to acquire a complete knowledge of his self or reaches a state of total self-realization; when he is able to obliterate from his mental screen the existence and memory of his own body and mind; when he is convinced that communion and union of the human self with the Divine self is the real goal of his life or union with the Divine is the real existence and when he is able to experience such a rare and unique spiritual bliss and ecstasy which he has never tasted , enjoyed and experienced through the medium of his senses and mind, he will be supposed to have attained a state of *Nirvana*.

Question : What is the status of knowledge in *Gurmat* or *Naam Simran*? Is achievement of knowledge the highest state of *Naam Simran*?

Answer : No, knowledge is not the highest stage in *Naam Simran*. To obtain knowledge of the highest state of *Nirvana* through the practice of *Naam Simran* and a thorough acquiring of the knowledge is the highest state. Once this highest

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state of *Nirvana* is achieved knowledge disappears. *Nirvana* is a state beyond both knowledge and its disappearance. It is purely a state of *Nirvana* or fearlessness.

Question : What is the difference between knowledge and the acquiring process of knowledge?

Answer : Knowledge means a state of realization, when a spiritual devotee given to acquiring knowledge and *Naam Simran,* realizes the real identity of his soul or his self. Bani of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* makes repeated references to this knowledge such as :

ਅਚਰਜ ਕਥਾ ਮਹਾ ਅਨੂਪ ॥
ਪ੍ਰਾਤਮਾ ਪਾਰਬ੍ਰਹਮ ਕਾ ਰੂਪੁ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬੂਢਾ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬਾਲਾ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਦੂਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਜਮ ਜਾਲਾ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਬਿਨਸੈ ਨਾ ਇਹੁ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦੀ ਰਹਿਆ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਉਸਨੁ ਨਹੀ ਇਸੁ ਸੀਤੁ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਦੁਸਮਨੁ ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਮੀਤੁ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਹਰਖੁ ਨਹੀ ਇਸੁ ਸੋਗੁ ॥
ਸਭੁ ਕਿਛੁ ਇਸ ਕਾ ਇਹੁ ਕਰਨੈ ਜੋਗੁ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਨਾ ਇਸੁ ਬਾਪੁ ਨਹੀ ਇਸੁ ਮਾਇਆ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਅਪਰੰਪਰੁ ਹੋਤਾ ਆਇਆ ॥

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ਪਾਪ ਪੁੰਨ ਕਾ ਇਸੁ ਲੇਪੁ ਨ ਲਾਗੈ ॥
ਘਟ ਘਟ ਅੰਤਰਿ ਸਦ ਹੀ ਜਾਗੈ ॥ ੜ ॥
ਤੀਨਿ ਗੁਣਾ ਇਕ ਸਕਤਿ ਉਪਾਇਆ ॥
ਮਹਾ ਮਾਇਆ ਤਾ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਛਾਇਆ ॥
ਅਛਲ ਅਛੇਦ ਅਭੇਦ ਦਇਆਲ ॥
ਦੀਨ ਦਇਆਲ ਸਦਾ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ॥
ਤਾ ਕੀ ਗਤਿ ਮਿਤਿ ਕਛੂ ਨ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਤਾ ਕੈ ਬਲਿ ਬਲਿ ਜਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 86

Wondrous and greatly unequalled is the description of the beauty of the Supreme Soul and Glorious God.
He grows not old, nor is He young.
He has no sorrow, nor is He caught in the death's noose.
He neither perishes, nor departs He.
In the beginning and from commencement of ages, He is contained everywhere.
He feels not heat, nor feels He cold.
He has no enemy, nor has He any friend.
He feels not joy, nor feels He sorrow.
Everything belongs to Him and He is potent to do everything.
He has no father, nor has He any mother.
He is yonder of the yond and has ever been.
By vice and virtue, He is affected not.
Within all the hearts, He is ever awake.

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He created three qualities and one mammon.
The great mammon is His shadow.
He is Undeceivable, Impenetrable, Inscrutable and Merciful.
He is Merciful to the meek and ever Compassionate.
His condition and measure cannot at all, be known?
Nanak is a sacrifice, a sacrifice unto, Him.

If one understands the complete meaning of this above quoted hymn, one gets a thorough knowledge about one's soul or self. One comes to realise the true identity of one's soul, one's self and the real source of one's identity. But even this realization will not suffice. We have been under an illusion for so many births and deaths. We have become habitual of existing under this illusion for so many lives. We cannot get rid of ignorance just by understanding the meaning of the above quoted hymn. After understanding its meaning, we come to realize how flawed our understanding has been about our own self. But what should be done further to get rid of our ignorance. The *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* and its teachings provide a proper guidance to us

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in this matter. It advises us that if we surrender our ego to the Divine Guru, practise *Naam Simran* and try to experience what we should experience as per the instructions of *Gurbani* then our thinking and old attitudes would change and get replaced by thoughts and spiritual experiences and attitudes as stated in *Gurbani*. As this revolution and transformation in our outlook starts taking place, our total outlook, our total psychology, our total lifestyle and our total routine will also change.

If we grasp, adopt and practise the *Gurbani* teachings in our life in their totality and if we keep on practicing *Naam Simran* and establish a perfect communion and union with the Divine, then we shall acquire all those comforts, happiness, and the complete power and perfection automatically without any extra effort - the perfection and power that we had been hankering after pursuing through the agency of our physical senses for the last so many lives. A person, having achieved that state of perfect bliss and ecstasy, will experience himself as a sovereign of the great sovereigns and more powerful than the lord of three mythical worlds. Achievement of

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this state of *Nirvana* will enable a devotee to abandon his pursuit of happiness by taking a human birth. One shall feel oneself to be the dearest son of God and consider the other created species and their lifestyle as inferior to his status. One shall never feel like taking a human birth again and repeat all those worldly chores.

This state of total detachment or desirelessness will arrive only when one attains a state of *Nirvana* or *Turia Pad.*

Question : Please refer to some hymns of *Gurbani* which describe this state of *Nirvana* or *Turia Pad.*

Answer : There are quite a number of hymns describing this highest spiritual state such as :

ਘਰ ਮਹਿ ਘਰੁ ਦੇਖਾਇ ਦੇਇ ਸੋ ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਸੁਜਾਣੁ ॥
ਪੰਚ ਸਬਦ ਧੁਨਿਕਾਰ ਧੁਨਿ ਤਹ ਬਾਜੈ ਸਬਦੁ ਨੀਸਾਣੁ ॥
ਦੀਪ ਲੋਅ ਪਾਤਾਲ ਤਹ ਖੰਡ ਮੰਡਲ ਹੈਰਾਨੁ ॥
ਤਾਰ ਘੋਰ ਬਾਜਿੰਤ੍ਰ ਤਹ ਸਾਚਿ ਤਖਤਿ ਸੁਲਤਾਨੁ ॥
ਸੁਖਮਨ ਕੈ ਘਰਿ ਰਾਗੁ ਸੁਨਿ ਸੁੰਨਿ ਮੰਡਲਿ ਲਿਵ ਲਾਇ ॥
ਅਕਥ ਕਥਾ ਬੀਚਾਰੀਐ ਮਨਸਾ ਮਨਹਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥
ਉਲਟਿ ਕਮਲੁ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਿ ਭਰਿਆ ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਕਤਹੁ ਨ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਅਜਪਾ ਜਾਪੁ ਨ ਵੀਸਰੈ ਆਦਿ ਜੁਗਾਦਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥
ਸਭਿ ਸਖੀਆ ਪੰਚੇ ਮਿਲੇ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਿਜ ਘਰਿ ਵਾਸੁ ॥
ਸੰਬਦੁ ਖੋਜਿ ਇਹੁ ਘਰੁ ਲਹੈ ਨਾਨਕੁ ਤਾ ਕਾ ਦਾਸੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 1291

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He, who shows the Lord's abode within the man's mind home;
He alone is the Omnipotent and Omniscient True Guru.
The Lord is manifest in the tenth gate, where the celestial strain resounds to the accompaniment of the sound of the five musical instruments.
Struck with wonder, one sees all the islands, universes, underworlds, continents and sphere there.
There one hears the resounding of strings of the musical instruments and sees the True Throne of the sovereign Lord.
Hear thou the music of the home of mental peace and be attuned to the celestial stillness.
Reflecting on the ineffable discourse of God, man's desire is dissolved in the very mind.
Turning away from the world, the heart lotus is filled with Nectar and this mind, then goes not anywhere.
Merging in the Primal Lord, man forgets not the mental meditation.
By the Guru's grace, all the organs are blessed with five virtues and man abides in his own

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home.
Nanak is the slave of him, who by searching the Lord's Name obtains this Home of his.

Question : How to achieve this state of *Nirvana*?

Answer : The state of *Nirvana* is located inside our own human system. We can locate it and realize it and exist and live in this state through the understanding of Guru's words or *Gurbani* and the practice of *Naam Simran*.

Question : What kind of *Naam Simran* and its practice be undertaken to achieve this spiritual state of *Nirvana*?

Answer : We should meditate on God's Name or practise *Naam Simran* after emptying our mind of all other kinds of thoughts. We should even get rid of this fallacy as well that we are a human being (body), mind or intellect. We should consider ourselves as soul alone and practise *Naam Simran* with our soul. After gaining an experience in *Naam Simran*, we shall start considering ourselves as a soul only. After this stage, we should even get rid of this feeling as well that we are a soul. After this total load

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shedding (of being a body, mind or soul) practise *Naam Simran* with whatever is left after this load shedding. In other words, we should get rid of every such label which creates a visual image of anything. After this total state of self-evacuation we should pracitise *Naam Simran*. When we do this total load shedding of our ignorance and our ego, then whatever remains inside us is that Supreme Soul or the Divine, or God or *Waheguru*. After that, we should focus and concentrate on what is left inside us. This is the state of lodging in one's own Self or Soul. After achieving this state of self-realisation or lodging in one's own self, we shall even forget about our existence in this state. We can, if we so desire, give up our body as well, once we have achieved this state of self-realisation.

Question : At what stage should we practise this kind of *Naam Simran*?

Answer : It should be undertaken when one has achieved a complete communion or union with the Divine and acquired perfect self realisation and when one feels like undertaking no further spiritual quest; when one is convinced

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that one has reached the peak of one's destination in one's spiritual voyage. This spiritual state will consist of perfect knowledge, perfect peace, perfect state of fearlessness and perfect bliss.

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Begam Pura
The Abode Of Eternal Bliss

(ਬੇਗਮ ਪੁਰਾ)

ਬੇਗਮ ਪੁਰਾ ਸਹਰ ਕੋ ਨਾਉ ॥
ਦੂਖੁ ਅੰਦੋਹੁ ਨਹੀ ਤਿਹਿ ਠਾਉ ॥
ਨਾਂ ਤਸਵੀਸ ਖਿਰਾਜੁ ਨ ਮਾਲੁ ॥
ਖਉਫੁ ਨ ਖਤਾ ਨ ਤਰਸੁ ਜਵਾਲੁ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਅਬ ਮੋਹਿ ਖੂਬ ਵਤਨ ਗਹ ਪਾਈ ॥
ਊਹਾਂ ਖੈਰਿ ਸਦਾ ਮੇਰੇ ਭਾਈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਕਾਇਮੁ ਦਾਇਮੁ ਸਦਾ ਪਾਤਿਸਾਹੀ ॥
ਦੋਮ ਨ ਸੇਮ ਏਕ ਸੋ ਆਹੀ ॥
ਆਬਾਦਾਨੁ ਸਦਾ ਮਸਹੂਰ ॥
ਊਹਾਂ ਗਨੀ ਬਸਹਿ ਮਾਮੂਰ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਤਿਉ ਤਿਉ ਸੈਲ ਕਰਹਿ ਜਿਉ ਭਾਵੈ ॥
ਮਹਰਮ ਮਹਲ ਨ ਕੋ ਅਟਕਾਵੈ ॥
ਕਹਿ ਰਵਿਦਾਸ ਖਲਾਸ ਚਮਾਰਾ ॥
ਜੋ ਹਮ ਸਹਰੀ ਸੁ ਮੀਤੁ ਹਮਾਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 345

Begampura is the name of the town.
At that place there is no pain or worry.

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There is no fear of tax of goods there.
Neither awe, nor error, nor dread nor decline is there.
I have, now, found an excellent abode.
My brethren, there is ever-lasting safety there.
Firm, stable and for aye is the sovereignty of God.
There is no second or third, He alone is there.
Populated and ever famous is that city.
The wealthy and the content dwell there.
As they please, so do they stroll about.
They are the knowers of the Master's Mansion,
so none does obstruct them.
Says Ravi Das, the emancipated shoe-maker,
he, who is my fellow citizen, is a friend of mine.

This hymn is composed by Saint Ravidas. He belonged to a lower caste of *Shudras* (cobbler) in the hierarchy of Indian caste system, but he became a great saint through his spiritual meditation or practice of *Naam Simran*. Saint Ravidas gives a graphic description of that higher state of spiritual realization which he achieved through meditation. He has termed this supreme spiritual state as *Begum Pura*. This spiritual state has neither any physical dimension nor a

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geographical location. On the other hand, it is the highest state of spiritual realization, a sort of highest psychic experience.

When the mind of a spiritual devotee given to *Naam Simran* is divested of all illusions and false sensual and mental thoughts; when this cleansed and evacuated mind is replenished with truly spiritual and Guru-oriented thoughts, then his total outlook towards life and world undergoes a change.

After this, although such a transformed or spiritually enlightened spiritual devotee or *Gursikh* lives in this material and physical world, he looks upon this world from a new spiritual outlook which gives hum an entirely new and beautiful impression about life. The stronger and the deeper his faith and spiritual convictions, the more tangible and attractive, his spiritual outlook towards the world. As per the rules of spiritual science, we become what we perceive. In other words, whatever kind of outlook we have, we acquire that kind of lifestyle or world. Quality of our life depends on our outlook. A *Gursikh* who has a firm unshakeable faith in *Gurbani* postulates, there is no duality in his outlook. He finds the

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Divine pervading in every form of life. He finds nothing in this world which is without the Divine presence and the Divine attributes in it. He perceives beauty, joy, perfection all around him. He experiences all the Divine attributes residing in his own self. He finds these divine attributes reflected in the whole world around him. All shades of evil and ignorance disappear from his vision.

There is no room for feelings of hatred, jealousy, enmity, fear, selfishness, worry, tension and want in a mind and heart which is enriched and saturated with feelings of love, absence of malice and fear, welfare of others and well-being. It must be kept in mind that self-contradictory thoughts (such as those of love and hatred) cannot reside in our mind at one and the same time. Only one category of thoughts (either of love or of hatred) can occupy our mind at one moment of time. Therefore, a mind and a heart filled with feelings of love can not be a sanctuary to contradictory feelings of hatred and malice at the same time.

Saint Ravidas's self became such a fine abode of all the Divine attributes that it was divested of

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or cleansed of all kinds of worries, tensions, fears wants and feelings of tyranny and hatred. He acquired this status or his self became the holy abode of the Divine because he had a firm unshakeable faith in the Divine. After this spiritual enlightenment, he experienced the presence of the eternal Divine in every object of life and this world and also observed all noble creatures living in Divine bliss. Because of Saint Ravidas's perfect faith in the omnipresence and virtuosity of the God head and His Divinity and his total rejection of the values of evil, intrigue and guile, he lived a life of virtue and service of humanity without any fear and favour. As burglars and thieves always live in perpetual fear of police and worry about the safety of pilfered valuables, similarly saints lead a life of virtue fearlessness, and freedom from tension, as they have an unshakeable faith in perpetual omnipresence and omnipotence of the forces of goodness and virtue. So Saint Ravidas states that the spiritual state in which he exists is dominated by a majority of noble souls and great fellow saints who live eternally in a state of fearlessness

Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji also describes this mo

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beautiful state of spiritual enlightenment visualized by a spiritual devotee steeped in *Naam Simran* :

ਸੁਖ ਮਹਲ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਊਚ ਦੁਆਰੇ ॥
ਤਾ ਮਹਿ ਵਾਸਹਿ ਭਗਤ ਪਿਆਰੇ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਸਹਜ ਕਥਾ ਪ੍ਰਭ ਕੀ ਅਤਿ ਮੀਠੀ ॥
ਵਿਰਲੈ ਕਾਹੂ ਨੇਤ੍ਰਹੁ ਡੀਠੀ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਤਹ ਗੀਤ ਨਾਦ ਅਖਾਰੇ ਸੰਗਾ ॥
ਊਹਾ ਸੰਤ ਕਰਹਿ ਹਰਿ ਰੰਗਾ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਤਹ ਮਰਣੁ ਨ ਜੀਵਣੁ ਸੋਗੁ ਨ ਹਰਖਾ ॥
ਸਾਚ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਰਖਾ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਗੁਹਜ ਕਥਾ ਇਹ ਗੁਰ ਤੇ ਜਾਣੀ ॥
ਨਾਨਕੁ ਬੋਲੈ ਹਰਿ ਹਰਿ ਬਾਣੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 739

His are comfortable mansion and high gates.
Within them abide the loved saints of God.
Very sweet is the Lord's discourse of equipoise.
Rare is the person, who witnesses it with his eyes. Pause.
There in the arena of saints' congregation , the Divine music is sung.
There His saints make merry with their Lord.
There is neither birth and death, nor weal and woe.
There rains the Nectar of the Lord's True Name.
This mysterious discourse, I have known from the Guru.

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Nanak, utters the Lord Master's Word.

Such a state of spiritual enlightenment is visualized after emptying one's self of all traces of ego and cleansing and purifying it thoroughly of all the dross of sensual and mental stimulations. Such a purified self experiences the bliss and brilliance of Divine grace spread all around him and basks in its spiritual splendour and glory.

The ultimate destination of a spiritual devotee and follower of spiritual science is to experience the spiritual bliss of this state of perfect enlightenment and exist as a permanent resident of this Divinely blessed spiritual world. A spiritual devotee can become worthy recipient of the grace of Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji and Saint Ravidas only when he starts leading a life based on their teachings and practice of *Naam Simran*. He can join the fraternity of great saints and find a place in the spiritual city of *Begum Pura* only when he evacuates his self completely of his egoistic and negative sensual and mental beliefs.

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The Observer And The Scene

(ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਟਾ ਅਤੇ ਦ੍ਰਿਸ਼)

In the Atam Science or Spiritual Science terminology, one who sees is called a seer (observer) and that which he sees is called the scene. The world can be divided into two categories, one the seer (observer) and the other the scene; one who sees and that which he sees. The seer (observer) is associated with consciousness, and the scene is associated with objects and commodities which do not have consciousness. In this way, the whole world is a conglomeration of consciousness and the objects which have no consciousness. While consciousness includes mind and intelligence, lifelessness or lack of consciousness includes lifeless objects having no consciousness.

One of the postulates of spiritual science is

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that the seer (observer) and the scene are distinct from each other. Whatever a seer or observer sees or observes is different from what the seer or observer himself is. Both the seer or observer and the scene can never be the same. They will always remain distinct from each other.

A spiritual seeker can take a lot of advantage from these postulates of spiritual science during his practice of meditation or *Naam Simran*. When a spiritual devotee is convinced that the observer is always different and distinct from what he observes, then he regards himself belonging to a separate category than the category of observed objects. This sense of difference or distinctness has a bearing on his sense of belongingness to the objects that he observes. In other words, the visible objects such as the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky, the mountains, the rivers, cities, villages, their streets and houses start receding from his consciousness or his sense of belonging to these objects declines. Further, his consciousness, instead of focusing on external objects, starts focusing inwards on his own self. From being an extrovert, he becomes an introvert.

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Now, when a spiritual seeker turns his consciousness inwards, he finds distinct world of its own existing inside him. Further, it is also essential to separate or alienate oneself from this inner world as well after the first step of withdrawing from the outer world. The first experience that a spiritual seeker experiences after getting introspective is that he finds himself even distinct from his own physical body. This is the first stage of *Naam Simran* , according to the postulates of spiritual science, when a spiritual seeker finds himself distinct from even his own body.

The first two stages of withdrawing from the world as well as from one's own body are comparatively easier tasks during the spiritual journey of *Naam Simran* . The next stages of this spiritual voyages are really difficult and formidable to achieve or arrive at. After acquiring a command or mastery over the habit of withdrawing one's self from one's physical body and considering one's self as distinct from one's body, the spiritual seeker or devotee starts viewing his inner world in the form of abstract thoughts. As a result, world, identical with the

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outward world, becomes visible inside to a spiritual seeker since both the worlds are identical in nature, the seer or the observer or the spiritual devotee finds himself as distinct from his inner world as he found himself from the outer world, as laid down by the postulates of Spiritual Science. *Gurbani* provides guidance to a spiritual devotee at every stage of his practice of *Naam Simran*. *Gurbani* informs him that the whole world is a creation or reflection of one's own mind and becomes visible to us only after being created or reflected by the mind. A spiritual devotee who understands this postulate, (that world is a mental construct), tries to get rid of his mental perceptions as well. Since the outward as well as inward creation are both mental constructs, a spiritual devotee tries to plug or cap the production or creation of mental thoughts or thought waves in his mind and succeeds in the attempt.

The moment the mental thoughts of thought waves stop appearing in the mind, their visual images, constructed by their mental thoughts, also disappear from the mental horizon. But the plugging off the mental thoughts and the

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consequent visual images is not an end of a spiritual devotee's spiritual voyage. He is still vulnerable to the subtle onslaughts of lust, anger, greed or avarice, attachment, pride, worries and tensions, sin, evil, and suffering or pain or sorrow. During this spiritual stage, it is very difficult to apply the above-mentioned postulates of Spiritual Science (of alienating one's self from both the outer and inner world and their mental constructs), but once applied successfully provide a great joy and relief as well.

The observer is always distinct from what he observes. During this state of awareness, the humble prayers of a devotee during his spells of *Naam Simran* get rewarded and answered by enabling him to alienate his self even from those abstract entities or thoughts such as those of lust, pride and greed. As an ordinary person perceives himself as distinct from the articles of his daily use such as his clothes, a devotee starts considering himself as distinct and standing apart from his mental thoughts, feelings and opinions. All kinds of human urges such as those of lust, anger, fear, worry seem as different and distinct to him as his articles of daily use such as his

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clothes which he is always wearing on his body. As a shirt or coat put on our body is distinct from our body as well us, similarly our mind and all the thoughts and thought waves, opinions and feelings start appearing as different and distinct from ourself. A spiritual practitioner who has aquired the habit or command or will power of seeing himself as a viewer, seer or observer becomes clear and convinced in his self that he himself, being a carrier or companion of those subtle human urges of lust, anger, greed and attachment is only their observer and viewer but his self does not belong to those urges as he or his self is distinct from those urges.

So a spiritual devotee at this stage of self-realization gets absolutely convinced and assured that the world or the whole creation is a mental phenomenon and he is related to this world due to his mind and its mental thoughts. When this mental activity of producing thoughts and their visual reflections stops or a spiritual devotee is able to exercise a control over this activity or plugging off these mental eruptions, then this whole relationship with the world is snapped. Then, his self, alienated from his mind and

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cleansed of all kinds of mental flab, gets permanently lodged in its own self where he experiences an indescribable peace and joy.

During this stage of alienation of the human self from the human mind, man's faculty of intelligence or sense of discrimination helps him a lot. But during the latter and higher stages of self-realisation spiritual enlightenment, even this faculty starts appearing as a tool which can be easily dispensed with as one's self starts feeling alienated and distinct even from his own intelligence.

During the further spiritual voyage carried on through the devices of *Naam Simran* and humble prayers, a spiritual devotee gets rewarded for his efforts in the spiritual sphere. The reward comes in the form of a further realization that behind the faculty of human intelligence there is the pull and pressure of one's human ego which can also be dispensed with as this highly spiritualised self finds himself alienated and distinct from his Ego and ego-centred intelligence as well. The perception or realization of one's self being distinct from and alienated from one's ego is a

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very advanced state of self-realization or spiritual enlightenment. One arrives at this state after very hard and arduous psycho-spiritual discipline and rigorous practice together with the combination of humble prayers. Alienated from one's mind, intelligence and one's ego, a spiritual seeker's self feels totally relieved, liberated, redeemed and united or bonded with the Divine. He becomes completely integrated and inseparable from his real source, the Divine and basks in the glory of his permanent and eternal union with his real self, the Divine :

ਮਨੁ ਮਰੈ ਧਾਤੁ ਮਰਿ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਬਿਨੁ ਮਨ ਮੂਏ ਕੈਸੇ ਹਰਿ ਪਾਇ ॥
ਇਹੁ ਮਨੁ ਮਰੈ ਦਾਰੂ ਜਾਣੈ ਕੋਇ ॥
ਮਨੁ ਸਬਦਿ ਮਰੈ ਬੂਝੈ ਜਨੁ ਸੋਇ ॥ *ਅੰਗ - 665*

When the mind is conquered, then man's desires cease.

How can God be obtained without conquering the mind?

Rare is the one, who knows the medicine to subdue this mind.

That man alone, knows that the mind is subdued through the Name.

ਸਗਲ ਭੂਪ ਵਰਨ ਮਨ ਮਾਹੀ ॥

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ਕਹੁ ਨਾਨਕ ਏਕੋ ਸਾਲਾਹੀ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 223
Says Nanak, I praise the One Lord who is contained in all the shapes, colours and hearts.

ਅਬ ਮਨੁ ਛੂਟਿ ਗਇਆ ਸਾਧੂ ਸੰਗਿ ਮਿਲੇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 705
Meeting the society of saints, my mind is, now, emancipated.

ਸਤਿਗੁਰੁ ਮਿਲੈ ਅੰਧੇਰਾ ਜਾਇ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਹਉਮੈ ਮੇਟਿ ਸਮਾਇ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 939
Meeting the True Guru, man's darkness is dispelled.
Nanak, stilling his ego, the mortal becomes pure and merges in the Lord.

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Rosary

(ਮਾਲਾ)

"Mary", said a young girl to a Catholic friend, "why do you carry that rosary everywhere, and what possible good does it do to you to count those beads over and over again?"

"Oh" answered Mary, "I never could make you understand what a comfort this rosary is to me. When I am tired out, or blue or discouraged about anything, or when I long very much for something that it seems impossible I should ever get it, I take my rosary and begin to pray. Before I have gone over half of its beads, everything is changed. The tired, discouraged feeling is gone. If I have been asking for something I long to have, it does not seem nearly so far away as before and I know that if I do not get just what I ask far, I will get something better."

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Those who are too narrow minded or too prejudicial to see anything good in a creed which is not their own, often sneer at the Catholic custom of "Saying the beads of rosary". To them it is only "superstition", "nonsense", to repeat the same prayer over and over again. These people do not understand the philosophy as well as the religion underlying this beautiful old custom. They do not know the power that inheres in the repetition of the spoken word, and in the influence of the thought expressed.

Anyone can prove this for himself. It is not necessary to get a rosary made of beads. You can make your own, an intangible but very real rosary, and if you say it over, not once, or twice a day, but over and many times, and especially before retirement at night, you will be surprised at these wonderful results.

It is a fault you wish to correct? It is a talent or gift you desire to develop and improve? It is contentment, peace of mind, happiness power to serve, power in your work whatever it is you desire, make it a bead in your rosary, pray for its accomplishment, think of it, work for its fulfillment and your desire will materialize.

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Mahatma Gandhi's Ram

(ਗਾਂਧੀ ਜੀ ਦਾ ਰਾਮ)

Mahatma Gandhi described his concept of God (Rama) as follow :

"My God (whom) I have given the name of Rama is not a historical figure of Lord Rama, son of Dashrath and king of Ayodhya, very often referred to in our (community) prayer. My Rama is eternal, beyond birth (and death) and invisible Rama. I worship that Rama. I seek His grace. You should also do the same. He belongs to everyone in equal measure. I fail to understand why a Muslim or anybody else should object to my naming of God as Rama. It is not mandatory (for anybody) that every one should identify God with the name Rama and worship him in Rama's image. He may if he so desires, worship God in

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the form of Allah in his heart of hearts, so that he is not out of sync with his God.

Sd/- M. K. Gnadhi

Harijan 28-4-1946

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Simran

(ਸਿਮਰਨ)

"In my childhood, my nurse Rambha suggested as a remedy for my fear of ghosts, the repetition of the name of 'Rama'. I had more faith in her than her remedy and so at a tender age I tried this method to cure my fear. It was of course short-lived, but the good seed sown in childhood was not sown in vain. I think it is due to the seed sown by that good woman Rambha that today the repetition of the name of Rama has become an infallible remedy for me in times of trouble."

Mahatma Gandhi

ਕੋਟਿ ਜਾਪ ਤਾਪ ਬਿਸ੍ਰਾਮ ॥
ਰਿਧਿ ਬੁਧਿ ਸਿਧਿ ਸੁਰ ਗਿਆਨ ॥

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ਅਨਿਕ ਰੂਪ ਰੰਗ ਭੋਗ ਰਸੈ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਨਿਮਖ ਰਿਦੈ ਵਸੈ ॥ ੧ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੇ ਨਾਮ ਕੀ ਵਡਿਆਈ ॥
ਕੀਮਤਿ ਕਹਣੁ ਨ ਜਾਈ ॥ ੧ ॥ ਰਹਾਉ ॥
ਸੁਰਬੀਰ ਧੀਰਜ ਮਤਿ ਪੂਰਾ ॥
ਸਹਜ ਸਮਾਧਿ ਧੁਨਿ ਗਹਿਰ ਗੰਭੀਰਾ ॥
ਸਦਾ ਮੁਕਤੁ ਤਾ ਕੇ ਪੂਰੇ ਕਾਮ ॥
ਜਾ ਕੈ ਰਿਦੈ ਵਸੈ ਹਰਿ ਨਾਮ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਸਗਲ ਸੁਖ ਆਨੰਦ ਅਰੋਗ ॥
ਸਮਦਰਸੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਨਿਰਜੋਗ ॥
ਆਇ ਨ ਜਾਇ ਡੋਲੈ ਕਤ ਨਾਹੀ ॥
ਜਾ ਕੈ ਨਾਮੁ ਬਸੈ ਮਨ ਮਾਹੀ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਦੀਨ ਦਇਆਲ ਗੁਪਾਲ ਗੋਵਿੰਦ ॥
ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਜਪੀਐ ਉਤਰੈ ਚਿੰਦ ॥
ਨਾਨਕ ਕਉ ਗੁਰਿ ਦੀਆ ਨਾਮੁ ॥
ਸੰਤਨ ਕੀ ਟਹਲ ਸੰਤ ਕਾ ਕਾਮੁ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 891

Millions of adorations, austerities, secular powers, wisdoms, miracles and angelic insights, dwell in him and he enjoys various spectacles, revelments and delicacies, within whose mind, by Guru's grace, the Name abides even for a moment.

Such is the celebrity of the Lord's Name. Man can utter not its worth. Pause.

He alone is valiant fortitudinous, perfectly intelligent, attuned to primordial trance, profound, unfathomable and ever emmicipated

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and his affairs are all adjusted, within whose mind abides the God's Name.
He is blessed with all peace, bliss and disease-free health, he sees all with an impartial eye, is perfectly detached and comes, goes and wabbles not ever, in whose heart the Lord's Name dwells.
God is merciful to the meek, the sustainer of the world and the Lord of the universe.
Contemplating Him by Guru's grace, worry is worn off.
The guru has blessed Nanak with the Lord's Name and he waits upon the saints and performs the saints' service.

ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਾਪ ਮਹਤਾਰੀ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਭ੍ਰਾਤ ਪੁਤ ਹਾਰੀ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਏ ਤੁਧੁ ਬਨਿਤਾ ਅਰੁ ਮੀਤਾ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕਉ ਰਖਿ ਲੇਹੁ ਚੀਤਾ ॥ ੨ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਪਵਨੁ ਅਮੋਲਾ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਨੀਰੁ ਨਿਰਮੋਲਾ ॥
ਜਿਨਿ ਦੀਆ ਤੁਧੁ ਪਾਵਕੁ ਬਲਨਾ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੀ ਰਹੁ ਮਨ ਸਰਨਾ ॥ ੩ ॥
ਛਤੀਹ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਜਿਨਿ ਭੋਜਨ ਦੀਏ ॥
ਅੰਤਰਿ ਥਾਨ ਠਹਰਾਵਨ ਕਉ ਕੀਏ ॥
ਬਸੁਧਾ ਦੀਓ ਬਰਤਨਿ ਬਲਨਾ ॥
ਤਿਸੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੇ ਚਿਤਿ ਰਖੁ ਚਰਨਾ ॥ ੪ ॥
ਪੇਖਨ ਕਉ ਨੇਤ੍ਰ ਸੁਨਨ ਕਉ ਕਰਨਾ ॥

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ਹਸਤ ਕਮਾਵਨ ਬਾਸਨ ਰਸਨਾ ॥
ਚਰਨ ਚਲਨ ਕਉ ਸਿਰੁ ਕੀਨੋ ਮੇਰਾ ॥
ਮਨ ਤਿਸੁ ਠਾਕੁਰ ਕੇ ਪੂਜਹੁ ਪੈਰਾ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 913

He, who gave the father and mother, who gave the charming brothers and sons and who blessed thee with wife and friends;
Enshrine thou that Lord in thy mind.
He, who gave thee invaluable air who blessed thee with the priceless water and who gave thee fire to burn;
O man, remain thou under that Lord's protection.
He, who gave thee thirty six sorts of ambrosial food, who made within thee a place to contain them and who blessed these with the earth and the goods to use;
Place thou that Lord's Feet in thy mind.
He, who gave thee eyes to see and ears to hear, who gave thee hands to work, nose to smell and tongue to taste, blessed thee with feet to walk and who made thy head to crown all.
O man, worship thou the feet of that Lord.

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Journey To The Eternal (Part II)

(ਅਨੰਤ ਦੀ ਯਾਤਰਾ)

ਤਨੁ ਮਨੁ ਗੁਰ ਪਹਿ ਵੇਚਿਆ ਮਨੁ ਦੀਆ ਸਿਰੁ ਨਾਲਿ ॥
ਤ੍ਰਿਭਵਣੁ ਖੋਜਿ ਢੰਢੋਲਿਆ ਗੁਰਮੁਖਿ ਖੋਜਿ ਨਿਹਾਲਿ ॥
ਸਤਗੁਰਿ ਮੇਲਿ ਮਿਲਾਇਆ ਨਾਨਕ ਸੋ ਪ੍ਰਭੁ ਨਾਲਿ ॥ ਅੰਗ - 2

I have sold my body and mind to the Guru an
have given my heart and head alongwith.
Seeking, under Guru's guidance I have see
Him, whom I did track and search in the thr
worlds.
Nanak! the True Guru has united me in th
union of that Lord who is ever with me.

The article "Journey To The Eternal included in the third edition of the book *"Simr Mehma"* published in 1956, was first written 1952. I keep receiving many letters from r readers related to the subject matter of this artic The readers keep asking me how far have

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progressed in my spiritual journey of *Naam Simran* during this period of 15 years between 1952 and 1967. So the following article has been written as my humble explanation to the queries of those inquisitive *Gurmukhs*, saints and practitioners of *Naam Simran* :

Now at the stage of my spiritual state, I don't require much time to connect and communicate with the Divine. The moment I close my eyes, my consciousness or my whole self reaches and stands in humble attendance of my real Divine source or *Waheguru*. I experience that all kinds of illusions, which existed between my self or my consciousness and the Divine, have been wiped out by God Himself. *Waheguru* appears in my consciousness at the first opportunity, the moment I shut my eyes. I experience this whole spectacle in my own consciousness. It is not a figment of my own imagination. On the other hand, this mystical experience dawns upon me when I am completely divested of my ego. Where there is no ego or "I" ness, there is no one to imagine.

Elimination of ego has taken place in my case as a natural consequence of my practice of *Naam*

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Simran. I thoroughly understand the process of this obliteration of ego but fail to express or convey this experience in a linguistic medium. But even then I will make an attempt to communicate this experience because I have been persistently asked to explain this process.

First of all, I used to wipe out the idea of my bodily existence from my consciousness and continue the process of meditation or *Naam Simran*. Then I started practicing *Naam Simran* by blocking my mental thoughts and keeping these out of my consciousness. After some practice, my consciousness started meditating or doing *Naam Simran* without being occupied by my mind and its mental thought waves. As I kept on practicing *Naam Simran* with my consciousness without its occupation by mind and its mental constructs, the outside world kept on disappearing from my consciousness. Then my consciousness learnt from my innermost source that world creation is a mental construct. So long as mind remains present in the consciousness or consciousness remains occupied by mind and its mental perceptions, the material or outer world or world creation will also remain present in man's consciousness. But

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the moment mind and ego are eliminated or evacuated out of consciousness, their mental constructs of space, time, cause and the world creation would also disappear from consciousness. These entities of time, space, and causation are mental constructs of the human mind. When mind is absent or eliminated, these entities also lose their identity. I acquired this stage of *Naam Simran* with the grace of God, and a suitable environment for the cultivation and inculcation of this noble practice was also provided by His grace. Mind and the world completely disappeared from my consciousness at this spiritual state of *Naam Simran* and I dived deep into my own self through my totally cleansed and pure consciousness. I became one with my realself or God. Nothing else remained besides the self at this stage. My consciousness in this spiritual state had very faint and vague memories about my once being a mind and in my mind there being world and in that world there being my body, as if all this mind body existence belonged to the past.

For this spiritual state of *Naam Simran* to be sustained, and acquire many more higher

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spiritual experiences, described later on in this article, an environment of peace and solitude was required. For this, the Divine will put forth an idea in my consciousness that it was very essential to establish a Sikh convent on a hill station after making me conscious about the miserable plight of many Sikh families (due to lack of education). For its implementation, I was made to write a will for my life-time patronage of this institution in the 1955 edition of "Atam Science" journal. This inspiration about becoming a life time patron came during *Naam Simran*. Atam Science Trust was established in 1955 at Calcutta with God's grace. I was subjected to go through the heart problem of coronary thrombosis of heart by the Divine will which lodged the idea of death in my consciousness. But on other hand, the Divine will conveyed to me the risks of staying in the hills through the medical advice of doctors. I was in a state of dilemma when I returned home after a six weeks stay in a nursing home at Calcutta. Announcement for establishing a Sikh convent in the mountains had already been made in the "Atam Science" journal. As offers of life membership and money started pouring in the

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doctors were made to remind me of the risks of staying on the hills for a heart patient.

On the other hand, my consciousness was made to realize that life and death were not in human hands. Death would definitely knock at everyone's door one day. If it knocked at a hill station, I would have, at least, this much consolation that I shed my mortal frame in the line of duty assigned to me by the Divine Will. There was no point in going back from this mission.

Since a *Gursikh* has no other capital except the capital of humble prayers, I started my journey towards Punjab in 1957 without informing my family members about my cherished mission with a prayer on my lips. I became instrumental in organizing *Gurmat* congregations on a large scale in the cities of Delhi, Ambala, Ludhiana and Jalandhar. When I reached Amritsar after holding a congregation at Jalandhar, I received a letter from Jalandhar containing an elaborate description of a hill station at Dagshai. I was sitting in the company of a few *Gursikhs* at that moment. When I enquired about Dagshai hill station after reading

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this letter, a *Gursikh* in that company informed me that he had come from Dagshai and also belonged to Dagshai. Dagshai, was the best hill feature among all the Simla hills, he told. He possessed a small piece of land there. This hill station was reserved for British troops and British officers, but it had become a deserted place after the partition of India in 1947. It is located at a distance of seventeen miles from Kalka on the Kalka-Simla road.

After arriving at Chandigarh from Amritsar, I reached Dagshai just for a picnic by road, along with my son in his car. There was a good scope for starting a convent here in the row of bunglows situated adjacent to each other. A bunglow was hired on rent after a few weeks and I sent for my woolen clothes from Calcutta. In this way, with God's grace, an opportunity was provided to spend a few years in a peaceful environment such as that of Dagshai. I had been spending almost nine months every year for almost five years from May 1957 to November 1961 at Dagshai. The spiritual experiences that I acquired with God's grace at this place are broadly enumerated as follows :

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1. An environment of peace and solitude which is very essential and beneficial for the practice of *Naam Simran,* also provides an ideal opportunity for the onslaughts of negatives such as lust, anger, attachment and pride as well.

2. A *Gursikh* cannot resist falling into the temptations of these vices single-handedly. He can overpower these only with the help of humble prayers to *Waheguru* to assist hum in this unequal fight. As human ego keeps on getting diluted and eliminated with the practice of *Naam Simran,* it goes on getting replaced by the presence of *Waheguru* in his self and finally His presence starts manifesting itself in *Gursikh*'s personality. Then a *Gursikh* never gets tempted by any of these vices.

3. A *Gursikh* or a spiritual practitioner of *Naam Simran* can never establish a communion and union with the Divine through his own efforts. But he must keep on making humble prayers during *Naam Simran* . These two combined efforts bring about Divine grace and *Waheguru* himself arrives to unite and reside in the devotee's consciousness.

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4. One should not be greedy even in one's prayer or *Naam Simran* . Greed is one thing –effort and prayer are quite another. Efforts and *Naam Simran* practice enable a person to achieve higher spiritual states. A *Gursikh* falls into the temptation of being greedy during his practice of *Naam Simran* to achieve all those higher spiritual states hastily without being worthy and completely eligible for these. It is a grave sin and blunder to fall into such a temptation. Only that kind of *Gursikh* gets really benefited by *Naam Simran* who neither slacknens or gets too lethargic or becomes too hasty and greedy during his practice of *Naam Simran*. He should continue to tread on his spiritual voyage with a faith in God and a prayer on his lips.

5. A *Gursikh* must keep a complete control and check on his pace of *Naam Simran*. At times, he should break his spiritual journey or stop his meditation for sometime whenever he feels he is losing his grip over his spiritual practice.

6. A devotee always goes on being benefited during his spiritual journey or practice of *Naam Simran*. *Naam Simran* practice moves ahead at a

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smooth pace when one is clean at heart but gets approbation from outside. God's grace is at its best when these two antithetical phenomena go on taking place simultaneously.

7. One must keep on analyzing the experiences acquired during the process of *Naam Simran* and ensure that these are in conformity with *Gurbani*'s teachings. If these experiences are going at a tangent to *Gurbani*'s roadmap, one should try to sychronise their direction with *Gurbani*'s message.

8. Good deeds are difficult to accomplish. These are rather arduous and full of road blocks. These get accomplished and bear fruit only after passing through so many hardships and obstacles.

9. A *Gursikh* should neither crave nor pray for the acquiring of *Ridhis & Sidhis* (power to perform miracles or having a mastery over men and matters). These powers make a devotee's self egoistic, arrogant and contaminate his consciousness.

In 1957, when I informed my relations about my desire to start a convent school at Dagshai

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and start a week-long recitation of the *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib,* my three daughters from Calcutta, Delhi and Chandigarh reached Dagshai and completed the *Gurbani* recitation together. Since they had to return to their respective homes after a week, I started living alone for the first time on a lonely, isolated hill top along with a cook employed from the hills. I did not come across any human being for many days at a stretch. The cook, after serving food to me and locking the house form all sides, used to retire to his servant quarters. After that,. I used to stay in my room adjacent to the room in which *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* was placed. Days and months passed in this routine. I could hear those "Primordeal Melodies" (*Anhad Shabad*), which I had occasionally experienced earlier as well, during this stay and thumped my back for being so fortunate. Sometimes, I used to go to sleep while communicating with those "Primordeal Melodies" and again started hearing these on getting up from sleep. Sometime, it so happened that I kept on hearing this celestial music in an awakened state, but went into sleep and started hearing those Melodies on waking up once again. I had

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already known that this spiritual stage of hearing "Primordeal Melodies" is a lucky sign during the spiritual voyage but it is also a road block for further spiritual progress. It is not the ultimate destination in *Naam Simran*. The real goal of *Naam Simran* is union with the Divine.

So among the sounds of these "Primordeal Celestial Melodies", the Divine Will led me towards that spiritual state which I have mentioned in the beginning of this article. It was a wonderful mystical and spiritual experience to gradually divest my self of every trace of ego and mind and its mental constructs and have a clear glimpse of the Divine and get into communion and union with Him. In this higher state of spiritual being, mind and its mentally-constructed world seemed to withdraw and disappear completely and gave a sensation of its being non-existent. The dimensions of time, space and cause seemed to be non-existent and my consciousness or self existed alone, in its ecstasy and lodged contentedly in its own self. Beyond this state, even the sensation of ecstasy and bliss too disappeared and a final state of union of "Thou and Thine" arrived. During this state of perfect

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union, even those "Primordeal Melodies" recede. into background.

During this meditational experience, the Divine made me experience as if my self never existed in the bodily form, as if the self had always existed independently of its mortal frame. Only a reflection of the self enters the body and it keeps functioning on the strength of this reflection alone. At the time of body's biological death, this reflection gets out of the body and merges into the self. The fourth state *"Chautha Pad"*, mentioned in the *Gurbani* of *Sri Guru Granth Sahib* refers to such a phenomenon of withdrawal of reflection and its entrance into the realself.

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Glossary of terms used

Amrit Wela : Ambrosial hours; the time before dawn ideal for meditation and *Naam Simran.*

Allah : The Name for God in the Islamic parlance or in the religious terminology of the *Muslims*

Anhad Nad : Primordial Melodies, the symphony of the celestial bodies heard and experienced by those steeped in meditation and *Naam Simran*

Asa Di Vaar : A composition of devotional hymns composed by Guru Nanak in *Raga Asa*. It is recited with the accompaniment of music in the early morning in *Sikh Gurudwaras,* all over the world.

Begampura : A state of perfect bliss and fearlessness achieved by the spiritually enlightened saints. It has been coined by Saint Ravidas and mentioned in his hymns included in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib

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Chief Khalsa Diwan : A social organisation of the Sikhs dedicated to the education of the Sikh children

Dasam Dvar : An advanced spiritual state achieved by the practitioners of *Naam Simran* wherein they achieve communion with the Divine and have a mystical experience of being one with the Divine

Gurbani : An umbrella term for the writing of Sikh Gurus and Saints included in the Sri Guru Granth Sahib

Gurmukh : Guru-ward - a person oriented and tuned to the Divine and having full faith in the Divine Will

Gurmat : The state of being or attitude whereby one behaves and acts as per the teachings of *Sikh* Gurus

Gurbani Kirtan : Recitation of *Gurbani* hymns to the accompaniment of music in a chorus by professional singers or congregation

Guru Nanak : The first Guru of the *Sikhs* and founder of *Sikhism*

Guru Gobind Singh : The Tenth Guru of the

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Sikhs who converted *Sikhism* into an organised religion with its distinct code of conduct, dress code and symbols, church and flag by *Khande-bate-ka-amrit* ceremony organised on the *Baisakhi* Day of 1699 at Anandpur Sahib

Guru Granth Sahib : The Holy book or the religious scripture of the Sikhs whom the *Sikhs* worship, read and follow as a living Guru for all times to come. With the installation of *Guru Granth Sahib,* the tradition of having a living human Guru came to an end.

Hari : A name given to God in both the *Hindu* terminology as well as in the text of Guru Granth Sahib

Ishwar : An other epithet used for God.

Japji Sahib : The first collection of Hymns in the *Guru Granth Sahib,* composed by Guru Nanak. The *Sikhs* are ordained to recite it in their morning prayer everyday

Kaliyuga : The Dark Age, the present age in which moral values are at their lowest ebb. Indian philosophy postulates time into four *yugas* or Ages namely *Satyuga, Duapar, Treta* and *Kalyuga*

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Madho : An other epithet used for God

Manmukh : A self-centred person driven by his own ego as opposed to *Gurumukh,* a Guru-oriented man

Naam Simran or Naam-Japu-Simran : Meditation on the Name of God in order to achieve spiritual enlightenement

Nihchal Raj : A state of eternal permanence, a state of spiritual poise and spiritual existence beyond the dimensions of time, space, birth and death etc.

Nirvana : A state of complete spiritual enlightenment or spiritual salvation free from the bondage of life and death

Nirbhai : A state of complete fearlessness or beyond the limits of birth and death

Nirvikalap : A mental state emptied of worldly desires, a state of total vacuum, a launching ground for a spiritual voyage

Namdhari : A sect among the *Sikhs,* a splinter group following the teachings of Baba Ram Singh, a great *Sikh saint,* freedom fighter and a social reformer. This sect has their distinct dress code

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and practice Naam Simran

Om : The name for the primal energy which controls this universe

Param Atma : The supreme soul or another name for God

Rehras : The collection of *Gurbani* hymns selected for recitation during the evening prayer of the *Sikhs*

Ram : The most commonly and widely used name for God. Also a great name in the pantheon of Hindu Gods

Sikh : A follower of *Sikh* Gurus and *Sikh* religion

Sikhism : Name of the religion followed by the Sikhs

Sikh Gurus : The ten *Sikh* Gurus from Guru Nanak to Guru Gobind Singh

Shabad : The word, the word of God or one that denotes God. Its repetition with concentration leads to realisation

Shudra : The term used for a low-caste person in the hierarchy of Indian castes

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Sajjan Thug : An imposter disguised as a saint who used to rob and murder innocent travellers. Guru Nanak pricked his conscience to set him or a path of a saint

Sukhmani : "A Psalm of Peace" collection of hymns composed by Guru Arjun Dev. It is recited in *Sikh* homes for peace and prosperity

Samadhi : A state of trance or enlightenment during meditation

Turia Pad or Chautha Pad : A spiritual state of complete enlightenment and salvation achieved through meditation or *Naam Simran*

Waheguru : The *Sikh* name for God. Its recitation with concentration leads to God realisation

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S. Raghbir Singh Ji 'Bir' (7th Oct., 1896 - 14th Apr., 1974), author of the spiritually stirring Books, is scarcely known to readers of English. Steeped in the sublime light of the Gospel of Peace, Sri Guru Granth Sahib, the dozen or so of his books, including his rousing poetry of 1920's in the post - Jallianwala Bagh era of resurgent Sikhism, not only popularized the treasured truths of Gurbani but also inspired many patriots and seekers of Truth.

ਸਰਬ ਧਰਮ ਮਹਿ ਸ੍ਰੇਸਟ ਧਰਮੁ ॥
ਹਰਿ ਕੋ ਨਾਮੁ ਜਪਿ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਕਰਮੁ॥

(Sri Guru Granth Sahib Page 266)

Of all the religions, the best religion is to repeat God's Name and to do pious deeds.

These two lines sum up the underlying philosophy of Sikhism and Sikh religion and encapsulate the broad Sikh ethos in a nutshell form. (Page 18)

Naam -*Simran* does not mean shouting for the Divine. It is a spiritual flight of a human soul towards its prime source for a union with the Divine. It is a spiritual voyage. (Page 111)

Naam -*Simran* is not the monopoly of any particular religion, nation or race. Whosoever undertakes this spiritual therapy, gets united with Waheguru (The Prime Source) and attains bliss. (Page 118)

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